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FOR REVIEW

“Die to Live”

WORKS BY
PRINCIPAL L. P. JACKS
D.D., LL.D., D.Lit.

THE LEGENDS OF SMOKEOVER

RELIGIOUS PERPLEXITIES

The Hibbert Lectures, 1922

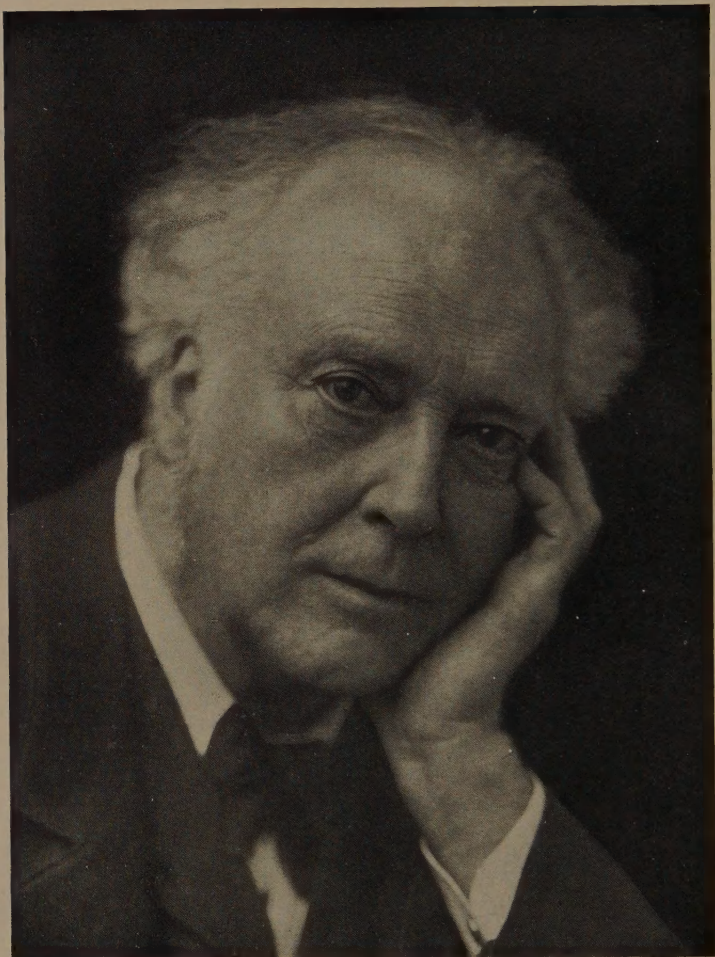
A LIVING UNIVERSE

The Hibbert Lectures, 1923

THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE

The Hibbert Lectures, 1924

HODDER & STOUGHTON, LTD.
PUBLISHERS LONDON, E.C. 4



[Photo G. C. Beresford.]

STOPFORD BROOKE

"DIE TO LIVE"

Selections from Stopford Brooke

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ARRANGED BY HIS DAUGHTER

OLIVE JACKS

WITH A FOREWORD BY

L. P. JACKS

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

LIMITED

LONDON

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN.
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
PRINTERS, BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

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Foreword

STOPFORD AUGUSTUS BROOKE, preacher, prophet, poet, mystic, man of letters and artist, proclaimed to the men and women of his time—and indeed of all time—a gospel of life which it is hoped that the following selections from his sermons will reveal. Seceding from the Church of England in middle age, and resolutely leaving behind him all theological controversy, his spirit fulfilled itself in the freedom and joy and passion with which he developed his conception of the Kingdom of God.

He preached the religion of Love and Truth in the liberty of the spirit, dwelling constantly on the Fatherhood of God, the Leadership of Christ, and the Immortality of the Soul. He preached the need of man for his God, the meaning of Prayer, the power of Faith, the quest for Divine Beauty, the spirit of love and fortitude in which to meet trial, the glory of the battle of life :

“Fight on,” he said, “fight on : fortitude, hoped victory, the certainty of it, the glory of war : these I preach incessantly.”

His message was intensely Christian : Christianity as an actuating force in everyday life, simple in definition, profound in significance, with an inward authority greater than that of the creeds, and seen as he believed the Founder meant it to be seen. In the words of Christ he found the doctrine of an unconditional self-surrender to love—dying to live—and in the person of Christ he saw the supreme revealer of the nature of God, the figure of humanity realizing an ideal for which the worlds were prepared. He believed that love is the law of life : that the race of man is perfectible and destined to perfection : and that the individual soul is immortal. His message was positive, constructive, personal : a spontaneous utterance of joy and confidence in the goodness and beauty of life and the power of love to win the victory over death. Appealing to the deepest needs of the soul, with a natural insight into the human heart, and addressing men as individuals, not as mere units in a mass, he was enabled to interpret his hearers to themselves, touching life at many points

with a wide and sympathetic understanding and with noble imagination.

Descriptive analysis might go much further, but it would not explain Stopford Brooke. He must be left to be his own interpreter. To say what doctrines he believed, and what disbelieved, would be to say little to the point, for he was one of those rare beings whose detailed beliefs are of no significance until we see them all fused together in the final light of the imagination. It was unquestionably the imagination—the faculty which places the truths of reason in their right relation and through that right relation kindles them with power—that dominated his work. But the wise will not find it the less significant on that account nor the less true.

Every reader must be left to receive his own impression and to make his own appraisal of the literary value of what is here presented. For my own part I feel constrained to say that I know of nothing in the published literature of the modern pulpit that surpasses the best of Stopford Brooke for force, for fire, for copiousness, for sustained adequacy to the height and majesty of the theme. Such qualities can hardly be

superficial. They have their root in a certain greatness of soul. Those who knew him, now a diminishing band, will bear witness that his speech on these high matters, at times almost torrential in the vigour and rapidity of its movement, was a true expression of the quality and measure of the man. He was not of those who speak from the lips outward. In the intimacies of private life, as well as in his public office of a helper to those who would live in the spirit, he is to be reckoned among the Great Companions. If this book helps the reader to discover him in that character it will have served its purpose and the filial piety which conceived and made it will be rewarded.

L. P. JACKS

MY thanks are due to the following, who have most kindly and generously given me permission to make selections from the volumes of sermons published by them :

Messrs. Duckworth and Co., from “ The Onward Cry.”

Messrs. Macmillan and Co., from “ Short Sermons.”

Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, from “ The Gospel of Joy,” “ The Kingship of Love,” and “ The Old Testament and Modern Life.”

The Lindsey Press, from “ The Spikenard and other Sermons,” and “ Religion and Life.”

O. C. JACKS

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The New Year

THE New Year has come, and for enduring and noble happiness we need many companions in our house of life. We need Faith and Hope and Love. We need Righteousness and Peace and noble Joy. We need Courage, Endurance and desire of Perfection. It seems much to need, more to possess. But for these indwellers we have room in our soul, and the power of becoming their friends. We are our truest self when they are present; and their presence draws us day by day nearer to our ideal self, to that image of us which in the beginning was with God and was of God, and is now with Him. "Our life is hid with Christ in God." This is a thought we should always keep with us. Our actual being, that to which we shall in the end attain, that which, after many years of struggle, we shall smite ourselves into and be at one with for ever, is now in God, and belongs to us, and is wholly perfect, lovely and divine. As we look forward we keep that thought before us. When the years

are hardest and most bitter, let us think of that which we are now in the mind of God; of the divine peace and joy and life which our actual life now possesses in Him, and with which we shall be at one. I do not say it will take away all hardness and pain to think and believe this, for pain is pain, but it will give us courage to endure, courage to fight on, courage to die doing our duty; till, as life wears to the close, and experience has made us veterans, we shall rise above the down-battening powers of pain; and thinking it and sorrow small in comparison with the larger world of perfection, be able to say with St. Paul, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Some might say, "A selfish thought"! But to those who think God is the Father of all, and that if one is contained in Him, then all are contained, this thought cannot be selfish. He who believes it sees not only the ideal of his own soul in God, but that of every one of the race of man; and, possessed with this universal hope, cannot remain thinking only of his own perfection. It is driven in upon him that the perfection of the individual can only be in the perfection

of the whole. Held in the particular, this conception of our being perfect in God becomes selfish; held in the universal, not. Nor will this conception, because it implies certain salvation, make sin easier or worldliness excusable. For the man who is wilfully doing wrong, or who is living only for the material world, will not, nay, cannot believe in this high spiritual truth. How can he feel that his life is hidden in God? How can he understand what that future perfection means? He has no spiritual ideal. A man must fight with sin and hate it, must refuse to make his dwelling in the perishable, before he can realise that he is not truly here at all, but is risen in the heavenly places, only a traveller passing from inn to inn, not an inhabitant. But when he does realise this thought—that his ideal and true self is now in God and perfect—what a power it has! This thought, this faith rises, like a prophet in the soul, and points to that in which it believes. It calls on us not to be unworthy of that life which we have in God the Father; of that other self of ours which is risen with Christ; of that ideal of our being which doth not yet appear, but which is like God, for it sees Him as He is.

The Christian Race

THE first and general need of the Christian race is temperate training of all our powers—senses, intellect, conscience, spirit. Where it is otherwise with us, temperance has not ruled development. We cannot run then any race well, above all we cannot speed in the Christian race. We run, but being all on one side we run off the course. Oh, be temperate in all things, most of all in the development of your good powers. For they, intemperately worked, to the neglect of the other powers of human nature, pass out of the limits of good into evil, or into the borderland of evil. Then we are to lay aside every weight. No runner carries heavy dress, ornaments, things which hamper the free movement of his limbs; and of such burdens there are many in this world. The first I think of lies on the shoulders of a large class in our society—the weight of a too comfortable life. Comfort is good in itself, but when it is sought and loved as the foremost thing, it presses the soul to earth. Men lose in it the desire of progress; the pursuing passion for ideas; the hopes that urged, the faith that inspired, their

youth; the thoughts that wander through eternity. Satisfied, they strive, they run no more. They hear no more the cries of their brothers caught in the nets of misery. The curtains of their comfort are fast drawn; they sit at home, wrapt in family ease. Outside, the sleet is falling, the bitter wind is blowing, thousands of the children of sorrow are dying in the fierce weather. God Himself is knocking at the door. We hear nothing; the cotton of comfort stops our ears. For a time, till God Himself breaks in on us with storm, and disperses our comfort to the winds, we can run no Christian race. Another weight is the cares of life. We keep so many cares which we might shake off that it is more than pitiful. We encourage fears for our life, our future, our wealth, till all our days are harassed out of peace, till the very notion of trust in God is an absurdity. We waste life away in petty details, spending infinite trouble on transient things, magnifying the gnats of life into elephants, tormenting ourselves and others over household disturbances, children, servants, little losses, foolish pre-sentiments, our state of health, our finances—till everyone around us is infected with

our disease of fret and worry. This is indeed to weight our soul. Our life with God, our work for man, are dragged to earth. We creep, we do not run, to meet our Master Jesus. One thing is needful, Christ said, and that one thing is Love. But this dreary anxiety which has mastered us is love of self, not of God or man. We are not satisfied, in our greedy selfishness, till we have hampered all our little world with our wailings, with our demands for sympathy. It is hard to conquer this temper, one of the hardest things in the world. But if we wish to run after Christ Jesus it must be conquered. Again, in the secret soul, carefully hidden from men—what do you keep which weighs down your activity for God, which checks your feet when you wish to help mankind as Jesus helped them? Small and petty jealousies which gnaw away your high endeavour, which eat the heart out of your ideals and make mean your imagination; dog-faced memories of injuries done to you; monkey vanities which tell you hour by hour that you are not appreciated at your full value; foolish fancies, decked, like the jay, in borrowed plumes, which you know you never will attain; self-deceits

which cheat you into following them, till you are lost in a morass of disappointment or of shame;—all silent, all unknown to others, hid in the locked chambers of the heart, and only God aware of them—what of them? Is there anything which more burdens the Christian runner? Were they known, could you speak them, they would die; you would be ashamed to keep them for a moment. But cherished as they are, like vipers in a blanket, they go with you everywhere! When you walk the streets, they are there; when you lie down at night, there they are. They rise and mock at you at your work, they attend you into society. They master and enslave the soul. They must be banished. Kill them by a fierce anger with them, starve them out by giving them no food. Fling them off the shoulders of your life; fling them off your heart. Else they will weight you so dreadfully that running the race, looking unto Jesus, will be for years impossible for you. Lay these selfish evils aside. It would be pitiable to take them with you into the other world. Lay them aside, and it will seem to you, as you run, as if you had cast a mountain from your heart.

The Christian Warrior

THE perseverance of fortitude which St Paul meant by patience is an active, not a passive, quality. There are those who think it Christian patience to sit down by the wayside to endure the storm, crying in themselves, "God is hard on me, but I will bear His smiting"; but their endurance is only idleness which is ignoble, and hiding from the battle which is cowardice. No, the severity of the battle is to force us into self-forgetfulness; and lazy resignation, wailing patience is mere self-remembrance. The true patience is activity of faith and hope and righteousness in the cause of men for the sake of God's love of them; is in glad proclamation of the Gospel; is in wielding the sword of the Truth of God against all that injures mankind. To blame God for the hard fighting He asks from us is unworthy of warriors; to thank Him for it is to look like true men on our warfare. On the contrary, to have from God a hard battle to fight is to have a God worth serving; not one who does all things for us and leaves us weak; not one who does not care for our progress, but one who bids us win our spurs;

not one who makes us good despotically and pauperises our spirit with gifts of righteousness for which we do not work, but one who loves our individual independence as citizens of the heavenly kingdom and bids us win full citizenship at the point of the sword. This is a God worth a woman's loving, worth a man's worship, honour and battle. The hardships He calls us to endure in patient fighting are to be met and loved; and their end is not a weak death by the wayside in base resignation, but the crown and glory of veteranship, the cross of honour on the breast, and the voice of Jesus crying in our ears, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

The true way to meet any evil is to manifest the opposite of it in your life, to shine upon it with the light of righteousness and love. If you wish to weaken and overthrow pride in men or in your friends, be yourself clothed with humility. If you would destroy a lie, make clear in your whole character the truth which contradicts it. If you wish to do away with injuriousness, let forgiveness glow within you. If you wish to conquer despair in your friend, let incessant hope brighten in your eyes and be eloquent upon your tongue. Do not denounce, shine forth. March for-

ward, all illumination, being and doing the things of faith and righteousness, of hope and joy, of peace and truth.

The Joy of Contest

WE want our rewards before we have done half we might do; are indignant if we do not see the fruit upon the tree; ask for worldly happiness in requital of spiritual goodness. If, after having fulfilled one duty, we are not allowed to sit down and rest, but find new duties, new work rising each day out of the old, we fly, too often, like Jonah, from the face of God to avoid some new call upon our hearts; or sink into a weary despair, ignorant and unmanly as we are. We are bound to awaken into a truer view of life; and to have the spirit to endure hardness, like a good soldier of Jesus Christ. For all our wailing will not change the fact that life is a battle, and that if we are not soldiers we must be useless. Whether we like it or no, the battle will rage and the mellay be hot around us. And the only way to get joy out of it is to spring heartily into the fight; is to take up the work with ardour; is to make trial itself the source of

stern delight by heroic contest with it. That is the only reward you will have here; but it is quite a sufficient one. And when the battle is won, then your rest will be won—the exact result, the natural fruit of that which has been done; the harvest-hour when God will gather into His garner the wheat you have grown, and men will feed upon its bread! What matter that you went forth in tears, that in the sweat of your face you ploughed and sowed, that in constant watching and warfare you brought the corn to ripeness. For now the hour is come when beneath the harvest moon of death, with laden wains, you shall go home, and the Master will gird Himself to receive you, and give you at last, give to finished work, the supper of His eternal rest.

The Education of God

IN all difficulty be man enough to act for yourself: be self-dependent and you will be saved. All running to and fro to get others to act for you only weakens and dissipates strength. It is true you have shirked the difficulty, but you have lost the experience

and the moral force which are gained by the conquest of that difficulty. The roar of life's ocean may sound hoarse and terrible in your ears, but strike out boldly alone, and you will conquer. The waves will often overwhelm you, but the struggle will teach you your weakness and your strength, and by and by you will be master of the tide, and will rejoice in the storm which proves your manliness. For you must either master the world, or the world you, and mastery is given to him who is self-dependent. As it is in daily life, so is it in spiritual life. In that hour when God touches your soul with the knowledge of sin, and with aspiration after a purer life, when the struggle against the habits of the past begins in which it is so hard to persevere; in the darker hour still, when the spirit is tortured with doubt of our Father's goodness, with doubt even of His existence—do not seek for any assistance which may take away from you the struggle, or put the pain of the soul to sleep. Do not hush up and stifle your doubts. Do not rest upon another. Return to yourself and accept the battle as a personal duty. God will not be found by putting off the troubles of the soul upon any one else; the battle

must be fought in the silence of your own heart. For God is found by personal prayer, by personal endeavour against evil, in the secret wrestling of the soul. That truth is yours only which you have wrought out of doubt by your own earnestness; that experience is only profitable which has been won by your own energy; that freedom is only truly possessed which has been won by your own native strength. . . . We cannot dream and drift all our days; and we cease to dream when we believe that God has chosen us for a work special to our hand. The knowledge steadies us. We have to prepare for the race or the battle; to harmonise the inward powers; to knit them into strength; to accustom them to work and to the shaping of thought—so that when the call comes, we and all within us may be like well-trained racers waiting eagerly for the summons. It is our duty to be content and wait; to do steadily what lies before us, though it seems the veriest commonplace. Then we are called upon to tend the flock given into our hands, to fulfil to the last jot and tittle the daily labour, and to believe that, in its doing, God is educating us, teaching and preparing us for the work of life. If we are

steady in that and in our faith, then the time will come when from without a new event will break into our life, confirm our hopes, give shape to our aspiration; until, at last, the idea of what we are born to do will dawn upon us and irradiate our sky. We are anointed in that hour to be king over ourselves, over our transient desires, our appetites, our base ambitions, and over all allurements from the world to be false to God and man. We are anointed to sacrifice ourselves, in labour, for the race to which we belong. The thought that God has dedicated us burns and glows within us. Our soul lives on the idea as the body on bread; and every day grows stronger, fitter for the coming work. The present is much, the future is more; and half the dignity of man, half the glory of the soul, consists in living for the future in the present.

The Support of God

IF ever the hour come when you stand alone with God against all your society, call to your side the powers that Elijah had on Carmel, and ask them to arm you for the

fray; gather your courage together and confirm it with the thought of God and the cause of man for which you fight. Let your will be steady and unmoved; not driven by impulse, but fixed firm on principles; guided by worthy thoughts, thoughts of which you are so deeply convinced that to part from them or betray would seem to you the death of soul and body. And, because these principles must seem to you righteous, live the blameless life, so that when you fight for them you may feel that you are worthy to buckle on their sword and to wield it in the battle day. Nay, live so always, that when the hour comes in which you shall stand alone, men may naturally claim you as God's champion against wrong. Nor can you wage your warfare steadily, joyously, unless you have faith in God, in whom the right and loving thing must always triumph; who, if you must die with your work undone, is sure to continue your life with Him, and to take care that your work will be continued on earth. It is a mighty power a man has when he believes that God is with him. He is lord then of all the world and of himself; there is that behind his will which gives it steadiness; there is that behind his courage

which gives it the calm which is the guard of courage. He can endure as well as fight through the long day of life; for he will have that most noble passion which does not flare, but burns with a heart of unquenchable fire—the love of God which, in a great hour of decision, lifts him into the conquest of the world.

Hymn

ARM, soldiers of the Lord !
The fight is set with wrong;
Take shield and breastplate, helm and sword,
And sing your battle song.

Strong whom the Lord approves;
Whose love of Christ is sure,
Who in the faith of Jesus moves,
Of conquest is secure.

Stand fast for Love, your Lord !
Faith be your mighty shield,
And let the spirit's burning sword
Flash foremost in the field.

Truth be your girdle strong,
And Hope your helmet shine
Whene'er the battle seem too long,
The weary days repine.

With news of Gospel Peace
Let your swift feet be shod ;
Your breastplate be the Righteousness
That keeps the heart for God.

And for the weary day,
And for the slothful arm,
For wounds, defeat, distress, dismay,
Take Prayer, the heavenly charm.

“ From strength to strength,” your cry ;
Your battlefield the world !
Strike home, and press where Christ your
Lord
His banner has unfurled.

Faith

WE believe in God as our Father, but we cannot demonstrate His existence or His Fatherhood. We believe in immortality, but we cannot prove it, as we can prove a proposition in Euclid. Nay, if we could prove either God or immortality in that fashion, I do not think we should be a bit nearer to what the theologians have called a “ living faith ” in them. Such a faith means a conviction of their truth which makes us so love God, and

the immortality to which we are going in Him, that our actions, thoughts, emotions and will are permeated by these beliefs in the same way as our life is by the passion of love. We need no proof of our love; we do not demonstrate it; but it is more real to us than the things we see and hear and touch. So we smile quietly if we are asked to demonstrate God, and why we love Him as our Father. We say, He is here, here in my heart! What need of proving Him or His love? Why should I waste my time in demonstrating what I know? Could I give you my conviction I would; but each must find it for himself. The soul must win the knowledge of God by its own effort, through its own experience of love and faith. If a mother were asked to prove that she loved her baby, her happy laughter would be her only reply. The child is bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, life of her life. It fills her days, modifies and regulates all she does. This is an image of a man's love of God and faith in Him. He knows, feels, loves and lives, by God in him. He has no need to prove Him. This is faith, and it is by its very nature outside of the world where things are demonstrated. There are

those who deny altogether the existence of such a world. Well, we can wait till their prison walls fall down and they see the infinite landscape. He that believeth need not make haste.

The Patience of Faith

LET the patience of faith which is active, not the patience of sloth, have its perfect work in your inner life. (We need such patience sorely in the spirit, and the faith in God by which it lives. For the great ideas, principles and hopes of our life with God grow slowly, against severe opposition, into fulness and certainty—as slowly as a pine, rock-rooted, and baffled and beaten by storms. We are impatient with temptations, with trials, with our own yielding nature, with the circumstances of the time which disturb our faith, with the weight of duties which confuse our life—impatient with God Himself, because He does not give us certainty at once. And in this impatience we are ready to throw aside all effort to establish communion with God, to pray to His Fatherhood, to strive for likeness to

Christ Jesus. Oh, a soul which is to live, and be fit to live for eternal ages, is not quickly built.) The mightiest truths take long to grasp as certainties. Their very simplicity hides them from us. Do not repine at the slowness of conviction. The long strife makes the truths clearer. If God grows into our inmost being with slow advances, He is infinitely closer to us in the end than if He revealed Himself in a flash. Wait on the Lord, and verily ye shall be fed. God lives in us for that very purpose—to bring weakness into strength, faith to fulfilment, failure to success, half-goodness to its fulness, trembling love to rejoicing love, our wavering truth to its secure foundation. It is His to save, redeem, restore, maintain our life till we wake from the dream to the substance, from the prelude to the full music, from dimness to eternal clearness, from imperfect to perfect union with perfect love. There will be no need then of patience, of faith.

The Patience which does not Rest

IF things are so desperately involved that you cannot act, that you must wait, do not

wait in that fashion which lets your mind, soul, affections or spirit get out of training, and which so many call patient resignation; but while you wait, fall back on your inward life, and there exercise all its powers. Call on the reason, the affections, the imagination, on the insatiable curiosity and outreaching aspirations of the spirit, to live and work; believing that, because justice is at the root of the universe, God will vindicate your cause if you do not go to sleep; that the time will come when a new life will open before you, when waiting will be over and action called for. And if in that faith you so live within, in a resolute eagerness to get into clear air again, you will finally go forth into the coming day in good trim, loins girded and lights burning, with all your faculties and powers, mind, imagination, affections, spirit, in such good training that you will be able with joyous force to grasp and use the fresh and happy opportunity. The patience of slumbrous resignation will never help us to that end. But the patience which does not rest, which sharpens into keener life the mental and spiritual powers, consumes, not our soul, but everything within us, and chiefly the sloth of resignation which prevents

us from going forward into life. It clears the way, as they say the Indians do, by burning down the brushwood in which they are entangled.

Courage

COURAGE is of the first importance for life. It is wise to get it well into our being; and one of the first things to do, in order to have it at all times and in all trials, is to get rid of the notion that it is only a physical quality; and to understand that it can be won by the will when the will towards it is directed by noble motives in accordance with the claims on us by Right and Love. There are sure to be hours in life when the whole success of all whom we lead—it matters little whether we only lead our own household or a whole army—rests on our facing danger boldly. We must accustom ourselves to realise that; and then the importance of our courage to others must so dwell upon our mind that, when the hour of danger comes, we shall be able, from the force of the high motives of our courage being the salvation of others, to master our trembling

nerves; to divide as it were our soul from our body; and to conquer the nervous thrill of the body by the high passion of the soul. Lift the soul above the body; it is the secret of courage. Let the masters of our being be love, pity and the doing of duty; let these, by daily training, be the first in us; and they will spring to the front, with such an impulse in all trial, that we shall not even know fear. In their rush the danger will be over, and overcome, almost before we are aware of it. Therefore, let us win noble passions, ideal aims, deep reverences beyond ourselves; and in the hour when they are attacked, and we have to defend them at the risk of health, or pain, or life, the danger will not touch the soul; fear will have no existence; we shall fly to the battle with carelessness and joy. . . . It is often the case in life, though men and women complain of it bitterly, that trouble doubles itself. Complaint is useless : it never heals the wound, and it takes away our strength to meet the trouble. It may happen that, having worked with some faith and fortitude through a long and dreary time, and having emerged with a sound ship out of the tempest, even while we praise God for our peace, we are called

on to face another storm. Clouds gather from another point of the horizon, menacing a new tempest, and before we have had time to set our resting ship in full order, the sun is hidden again from our eyes and, unrested, we have to renew the strife. This is a fate which often happens to seamen on the ocean. It is no less frequent on the ocean of life. Then, like the seamen, we know that the time is come, not for complaint, but for fighting the long days through, contending, not so much for life, as for keeping true to the heroic character, to our divine origin, to the life within us of fortitude, faith, hope and love. We may die, but we must not die unworthily. That is the right and noble temper of the soul. It is also the wisest temper. If you have to fight a long battle, this is the spirit which gives you the best chance. It is certain to secure the victory of your soul over evil. It may secure victory for your life over all misfortune, and send you forth young again, alert and joyous, to begin a new career. Complaint will not do that; courage will.

Work and Joy

ALL our true life is made up of work, and joy, and sorrow, and growth. With regard to Work, into which we shape all our inward being, it is the work also of God, and in that belief all work is sanctified, guarded by conscience, freed from the world, ennobled by an ideal, enkindled by love, triumphant in failure, finished with joy even though it be finished on the Cross. And as to Joy, it does not, if we hold it within this idea of natural union with God, remain within ourselves, nor end in selfishness. It passes beyond the earth to become gratitude in Heaven. We lose the chances of its becoming evil, when we bind it up with God. We will have none of it for which we cannot praise God with a quiet mind. And, day by day, as we praise Him for pure joy, we find more for which to praise Him; we fill the world with God and walk with Him. His is the freshness of the morning and the rest of eventide. His the beauty of the woodlands and the waters, of the mountains and the clouds that love them, of the deep sea and the multitudes of the flowers, and

His the language of the kindly earth and the ancient Heavens. The rapture of all the love that we have known is His, and to Him belong all the great hopes that have transfigured us, and all the rushing life within which we rose again, like Jesus from his grave, when our stricken heart seemed dead. All our joy is God's—we and the Father are one. Praise becomes the air we breathe, and from our praise flows so great a gladness that others learn to praise. And then, when sorrow comes and pain, we are not unprepared. We know they are in His order whom we love, with whom we are at one. We suffer, but it is with the certainty that the suffering will come to an end, and that the end will be the blessing of others, and, in that, our own.

Humility

IF you want to make your Christian life happy, free, unencumbered, strong, full of peace—get humility; with it you will get the charm all men desire, the charm which draws men and women to your side to hear and know the wisdom that is in love. There

is nothing that attracts more than this grace. It makes a man as delightful as a child. It sets the soul free. Take it with you when you resolve to cast off the works of darkness and don the armour of light. With this loveliness, and, indeed, because of it, there is a sense of glory, of spiritual dignity in the soul, which is sure to belong to the believer in the good news of Jesus Christ. We rejoice in the glory of God of which we form a part; in the majesty of the destiny which belongs to us; in the high calling that is given us; in the divine life which is ours now, and shall be ours still more abundantly. The Christian brightness, the dignity which lifts us above the world, can no more burn and shine without humility than a candle can without oxygen. But when, out of lowliness toward God, this, our glory in God, springs to God, then what a power, what a splendour it is for life! To look at all we are becoming in God, and to believe in all that we shall be, makes our step triumphant, our hearts beat fast with joy. Our eyes are so full of the light of hope that the most despairing of men, seeing us, take courage for life; our soul is so full of faith and its power that there are no difficulties

that we may not overcome, and no trial which we shall not conquer. Infinite life, strength and joy—these are ours by right through our union with God. This is the glory and greatness linked with our humility.

Gratitude

IF we delight in gratitude—and no sweeter, purer pleasure, except that of giving, is on earth—how much more must God our Father, who bends to ask for our heart, delight in it? He would not wish our love, and what is gratitude but love for love expressed, did He not enjoy it. Love loves love. Yes, when, like the woods on a spring morning, our soul is full of songs to God, with joy as natural and unconscious as the delight of birds in dew and light; or, when in deepest sorrow, we have felt Him near, as comfort, love and strength, and our heart fills with gratitude like a sea, till sorrow is drowned in a higher feeling—then it adds a dearer, more mystic touch of pleasure to know that He feels our thankfulness with pleasure. It brings Him near to us in that communion which has no voice, so profound is the sweetness of its rest.

We think too much of our sins and miseries, and then our heart grows hard. Turn now and again and think how much you have enjoyed; how many good, pure things have been yours; how, if there have been sharp intervals of bitter grief and pain, there has, on the whole, been a continuousness of good and pleasant things which, like a stream by the path, have companied our way. And be like the traveller, when he stays to think of his companion whose music has made the undertone of all his walk, and sent its voice to flow through all his thoughts—grateful to the Lord of Love. . . .

It is good to live in a grateful atmosphere, for the heart wins the habit of gratitude. We are ready then to feel it for all the little kindnesses, and the daily touches of gentleness and tenderness, of which we too often take such careless heed. We lose so much when we are not of thankful mood; we miss the scent and beauty of a thousand wayside flowers of love, when we are not attentive to give thanks or to feel thanks. We miss so much of the power of making others more at ease, more happy in society, when we are not quick to be grateful. And, of that noble courtesy which makes true

gentlehood, the finest grace is sensitiveness towards gratitude. There are few things which bless and soothe the life of others more, or do them more good, than the giving of thanks. It makes men feel that they are some use in the world, and that is one of the finest impulses to a better life. It cheers many a wearied heart with pleasant hope, and bids many a man who is sad in mood take courage. It is the soother of the world, and, like mercy, its work is two-fold, for it blesses him who gives it and receives it. We give much blame, and it may be well. Let us give a little more gratitude, and it will be better for the world. For the world wants kindness far more than harshness. It is very sore with many sorrows, many blows, and we know not how much good a tender voice and soft hand may do. We have so short a time to live, let us feel and give all the gratitude we can.

Poem

A LITTLE sun, a little rain,
A soft wind blowing from the west—
And woods and fields are sweet again,
And warmth within the mountain's breast.
A little love, a little trust,
A soft impulse, a sudden dream,
And life as dry as desert dust
Is fresher than a mountain stream.

So simple is the earth we tread,
So quick with love and life her frame,
Ten thousand years have dawned and fled,
And still her magic is the same.
So simple is the heart of man,
So ready for new hope and joy :
Ten thousand years since it began
Have left it younger than a boy.

A Quiet Heart

LET us do our duty to our country and
our God with quietness, so shall the per-
formance of duty be the winning of strength.
When the life of a people or of a man is
noisy, frivolous, full of petty excitement, it

is frittered away and dispersed into a thousand channels instead of being concentrated into one. It would be well if we could learn to be quieter in England, and live less a life of frivolous excitements, more naturally, more calmly than we do. We should then win greater national and individual strength; we should then have some peaceful hours to give to God, to learn the lofty duties of the soul which minister to power, to gain some knowledge of those high hopes and aims which belong to the placid world beyond and give to the man who possesses them a quiet strength in life. For he is weak indeed who lives only in the passion and turmoil of this lower world. It is well if we learn the lesson that quietness is strength. For in silence of character the will is concentrated, and without concentration of will no work can be well done, no sin overcome, no Christian race be run. Give in quietude your whole soul to your work, work of hand, and heart, and eye, and spirit, and every step will be marked by additional strength. For you have expended nothing; you hold all your force in reserve. And in the higher sphere of human life in which the soul has its silent

relations to God, there, above all, if we would be strong, we need a quiet heart. In prosperity to be humble, in sorrow and trial to possess the peace of Christ's resignation, in the march of life to trust silently in the Heavenly Father and do our work in stillness; in the struggle with temptation to concentrate calmly our will on conquest; in the hour of death to repose on the peace which Christ left as his last legacy to his disciples—this is Christian strength, a life hidden with Christ in God.

The Peace of Self-control

IN how many of our lives is there any temperance at all? Or any desire to work for it? Who among us realises, before we plunge into some excitement, or into any unbridled thinking of ourselves, the meaning of that image of Giotto—where the noble Virtue of Temperance stands binding the hilt of her sword to the scabbard, lest she should draw it too quickly, even when she is righteously distempered? Who, when a wild desire cries for satisfaction, has the habit of turning it out of doors? Who,

when life is dull, and a fresh pleasure offers itself, restrains himself until clear answers are given to these questions—"Is this right in the eyes of Love? Will it sow sorrow in some soul, or disturb some life?" It is wise, even at the risk of checking noble impulse, to ask these questions now, when self-indulgence is so much the mistress of society, or the mistress of our own lonely, self-devouring heart. It is wiser now, in this life of doing or thinking our own pleasure, to make self-control, for love's sake, the governor of the soul. For the want of this temperance is the curse of modern life, and its certain result is peacelessness. Those who dwell in it have a hundred masters in a hundred desires, whether they live in society or alone in a garret. Each of these desires, unrestrained in thought, leaves trouble behind it—trouble that follows us, and overtakes us when we least expect it. Then when we have done harm to others by gratifying our desires, a fresh peacelessness, unless we are quite hardened, arises—the trouble of regret, remorse; the worm whose sting plies incessantly, as if the beast were endowed with immortal power. Men and women cry for peace, but they will take no

trouble for it. They will renounce nothing. Peace will only be ours when we have mastered self-desires for the sake of love; when, in temperate government of the soul by One Law of Love, we have won the self-forgetfulness of Jesus Christ. Then the soul, having unity in its diversity, having passion subdued to whiteness by self-control, having power because all its qualities radiate to one point where burns the Love of God for man His child—has Peace within, deep as the seas of eternity.

The Shadow and Shine of Life

WE are told that life is serious, and indeed, we are foolish when we strive to put that truth aside. Also, God, in His idea of human life, intended it to be a serious thing, and, in the continuous working out of this idea, has taken care that we should not forget that life is serious. He has so settled matters that we must fight for our lives, for our characters, for our knowledge, for our religion, for everything we hold dear, like men who keep a post on some wild borderland against a host of foes. He has made the

world very difficult for us, and I am content for myself and for all men that it should be so. It proves to me that He respects the creatures He has made. He does not think that paternal despotism is the best method to make good citizens for the spiritual kingdom. He does not leave us without the help of His grace, spirit speaking to spirit, for we are His children; but the help is that which a father gives who wishes to make a man of his son. . . . That is one aspect of the Christian life; yet there is another. It is its brightness and its joyousness, its eagerness in battle, its hope in the storm, its certainty of victory. There is a joyousness in fortitude and good fighting, which every great warrior or honest soldier has felt, which is ours when we follow the banners of the Lord of love and holiness. There is even a quiet gaiety in our soul when, freed from the power of sin, from the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches, we know that we are far above these enslavements. . . . The seriousness of a true soldier of Christ should be capable of play, of gracious happiness, of the joy of inspiration, of that gaiety of heart which goes to battle as if to a feast, of rejoicing evermore, as he

said who of all the Apostles suffered most, thought most, worked most, and fought the hardest. This is the mingled cup of Christian life, its shadow and its shine.

The Art of Life

LIFE should be fully and nobly ornamented, made so lovely with the loveliness of love and graciousness that it will draw men into admiration and imitation, awaken in them silent and poetic pleasure, such a pleasure which ends in love, and which, being love, cannot rest till it is shaped into action which expresses the pleasure of loving. That is the spirit which, wherever it breathes in daily life, advances and adorns the progress of mankind. The useful life must be made beautiful with noble thinking and sacred fire of feeling. The moral life must be wrought in and out with the grace and tender charm which Christ had. Your teaching, work, home life, marriage, pursuit of knowledge, pursuit of business, keeping house; your social life, your philanthropy, the reform you advocate, the manual labour you exercise, your association with your friends, workmen, servants and employers,

ought, one and all, to be lived with such grace, courtesy, gentleness, thoughtfulness and lovingkindness, that men may feel as if they were hearing sweet music. Life should be a lovely art as well as a science and a religion. And this high ornament and beauty, springing out of love and all its offices, and wrought with the chisel and the pencils of humility, meekness, mercifulness, simplicity, a quiet spirit, will bless the world, enkindle humanity from age to age, give it faith and hope in itself, minister to its noble pleasure, and lift yourself daily and hourly into closer likeness towards that ideal of your life which, when you were in a diviner mood, God showed you on the Mount of Vision.

We ought to do our work in the world, but in such a fashion that it does not prevent our seizing that which is divine, beautiful or eternal, when we meet it. We should so live as to be able to detach ourselves from business, from cares, pleasures and ambitions of the world, at any sacrifice, in order to seize the immortal hours of life. Those high and spiritual hours are few—the hours when we touch some great character; when we, suddenly given some revelation of divine

awe, beauty, peace or joy, are filled with inward light and see the secrets of God, of man and nature; the sacred days when a great human love is realised or given; or when the soul, in profound and holy passion, looks on the countenance of the perfect love. Get the character, gain the habit of life, which can recognize these hours, know their importance, and fling everything aside as worthless in order to secure them for the soul. Nor will that be undutiful to humanity, to which also we are bound to refer, as to a judge, for a sentence on anything we do in life. To gain this character, to show to man that the true life does not consist in that which he possesses without, but within, is infinitely more important for the human race and its progress than to live the other life. And nowadays, when life is so hurried, tormented; when the outward tends to be all; when the paths of society are filled by a restless, pushing, maddened crowd; it is for the very salvation of humanity if a few, at least, can declare that this is not the whole, not the best part of life; that, on the contrary, this hurry-scurry, of which whole nations boast themselves, is not life at all, but a form of death.

The Exaltation of the Soul

WHEN we do the will of our Father, we are masters of the whole power of the world to disturb the soul. No injury can touch us to the quick. Nothing can finally hurt the inner life. A thousand troubles may fall on us, but the soul remains unconquered. It is at one with the righteous law of the universe. This is the faith which makes life victorious. But it does more than secure the soul. It exalts it, lifts it into a splendour of thought and passion. For it fills us with so great an imagination of the wonder and infinity of righteous law, and of its excelling beauty, and of Him who is this righteousness and order, and makes them live beyond Him, that we are ravished by the glory of this vision into uplifted love and worship. The soul is exalted into an ideal reverence. "Stand in awe," cried the Psalmist, as he felt this thought flowing through his mind. And to stand in awe before the vision of God—awe traversed incessantly by ardours of joy and love in what the soul has seen—is the exaltation of the soul. Reverence—to stand in awe and sin not—is the enrichment

of the spirit. For reverence is one of the comrades of love. It is, yet more, one of the roots of knowledge. It is also the temper which enables the imagination to perceive and to love beauty; and beauty, in the true world, is always married to righteousness. When wonder and love, knowledge and beauty, are the indwellers of our little world within, and stand with awe here, in this life of ours, before God, before nature and before humanity—then, from the smallest, as from the greatest things, spiritual ennoblement will stream into our soul.

The True Life

HAVE you gained your soul, or do you lose it day by day? Are you with Jesus, or with those who crucified him? I do not ask you, like so many, "Have you saved your soul; are you safe?" I do ask you, "Have you got a soul at all in the sense of which he spoke?" Have you got within you the powers and qualities of the divine life, the powers of Christ? Are they so living and full within you that they rule over your whole life, direct and check your action,

order and temper your thoughts so that nothing is felt towards God which they do not encourage; nothing done in your business, in your society, which may not be brought before the tribunal of these judges and approved of by their sentence? To have a soul is not a profitable thing, as the world counts profit. It is even less than profitable. Its elements are against the profit the world desires. There is nothing so damaging to the getting or keeping of selfish wealth as righteousness, justice and mercy. Sacrifice of self is the undying foe of covetous accumulation. Humility, truth, honesty, boldness of speech in defence of the oppressed, a clean front against idleness, holding to principles of love which society repudiates, will not allow you to use many of the means the world around you uses in order to succeed. These qualities of the soul, faithfully brought into act, will often mean worldly failure; and if you keep them, you will have to be ready for that which men call loss. Again and again in life, you have to make that choice, sometimes in small matters, sometimes in large. And it is time you gather yourself together, and choose whether you will serve the world or

the soul. . . . When is our restlessness worst, when is our wandering desire most disturbing, when is our conscience most wakeful, barking like a watch-dog? It is when we are drifting through life as it were a dream, or doing strenuously that which bears no fruit! That great Imperative haunts us as incessantly as the wind pursues the clouds, until we become a part of it, part of the Wind of Duty. Nor is there any freedom from it; and if we take a fancied freedom, we are soon weary of it. That is our punishment for breaking this law—weariness of life. Our desires become a burden. Even our amusements become sad in idleness; beauty and joy fade out of life. We cease at last to admire, to hope and love—and even, while we desperately seek variety, variety departs. . . . To this, the words of Jesus come home with force. Not only did he say “I must work,” but “I must work the works of Him that sent me”—the works of God his Father, whose work was giving, not getting; distributing, not accumulating. Giving away—that was the foundation of God’s work, and of ours. Moreover, God’s work has its own character, with which our work must be accordant. I must work the

works of the eternal truth, justice, pity, long-suffering, love and righteousness. That was Christ's conception of Life. He felt that his work was to reveal the character of God; to make manifest to men what divine love and justice were, what mercy, truth and righteousness were in the Highest.

Man does not Live by Bread Alone

To every one of you the spirit of the world speaks as it did to Christ. It whispers to some of you to take your ease in life, and especially when you are young. It bids you barely fulfil the common work of life, and give the rest to your amusement. It salves your conscience, if you have no business, by calling amusement work. It bids you slur over the duties which might disturb your luxury, and hush up the doubts which trouble your soul, and run away from the trials which are sent to you to endure, and by enduring to turn them into power. It bids you grasp the rewards of toil without the toil, and taste all the joys of life and satisfy all its desires before you have won the strength which will prevent you from

being intoxicated. And you yield; and never fighting with any difficulty or overcoming any trial, always idling, always indifferent to the higher life, not caring to trouble your sin or your pleasure by the stern thought of God, who demands truth to Him and to your higher nature, you become sensual and therefore weak; selfish and therefore base; useless and therefore ungodlike. Above all, your spirit, unexercised in contest against sin, never taught to climb the difficult mountain of aspiration, never fasting, never in the wilderness with the wild beasts, loses its health, becomes paralysed, and you are left in your garden of ease, lost in self, while without its rosy walls rages the battle of mankind against the adversary. In the midst of the combat is your true place. You would learn there that man does not live by bread alone, but by obedience to that word of God which calls him to the onset against evil. Oh, better far for you had you chosen the desert with Christ than the garden with the tempter!

The Turning-points of Life

WHEN we come to the turning-points of life, to the heights whence we see two ways of being—the mountain path with God, the primrose path of ease and selfish comfort—we will choose with Abraham and not with Lot. If indeed we take the choice of Lot, we shall win the world, but, with it, inward weakness, solitude at the end, and, perhaps, Lot's degradation. But if we take Abraham's choice, we shall have God in the heart, friendship with the Holiest, immortal love, mighty thoughts, sweet emotions which will clothe the soul in garments wrought of the gold of divine imagination; our life will move men on to nobler ends; our character deepen into stateliness of being, into all the gifts and graces of the manhood which is divine in Jesus Christ. And with greatness of character and God's life within, the greater faiths of Christ will slowly perfect themselves in our soul. We shall come to believe in the regenerated future of mankind. As Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day, so shall we rejoice to see the day of the Christ which is to be. The universal life we feel

true for the whole world will finally add itself to our own life. Knowing that God is within us, we shall not be able to resist the spiritual proof of immortal being which inward likeness to God has made for us. "I cannot die," we will say in the very arms of death. "I look for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." . . .

The spirit of human help was in Abraham, and the hand did what the spirit called for with flying ardour. For want of this speed enterprises of great pith and moment fail. For want of this sudden fire of deed, after resolute counsel has been taken, how often have we lost the good we might have done in life; how often have we failed to help men, to deliver the captives of wrong, to rescue the spoil from the cheater, to restore peace to the family or to our society, to establish our cause for the sake of man, to win the crown of saving men! We go on taking counsel till the hour is past; we delay acting till action is of no use; or we take no counsel, and, having no wise plan, break down in action; or we act alone, not having previously made trusty and faithful comrades, not having previously gained them by proving

that we want nothing for ourselves. Unsupported then, having no plan, we linger in our tent, and when we do resolve to act, it is too late. The opportunity is lost. On the contrary, at every crisis, we should act like Abraham; consult quietly but at speed, knit round us all who can act with us, and pursue, day and night, with unrelaxing swiftness, till we surprise the camp where the enemy sleeps secure. There is indeed no crisis in the life of the world, in our own daily life, however small it be, to which it does not apply. When you have taken counsel, when you have formed your plan—put it into form, taking all the risk, with the speed of lightning; and carry it out to the end, waiting till all is over to remember weariness. We can rest when the work is done, but not till then.

The Call of God

WE have all felt God in the first crisis of our life as the All-seeing, and have obeyed His call to take up the duties of a steady life. Then many years pass by and monotony lays its withering finger on our life. We

need another shock—the shock of the afternoon of life—if we are to grow into something higher. And it comes, awakening us from the commonplace, stirring us to our centre. Cruel and bitter we think it, as we are driven into the desert, leaving behind us all the ancient loves and sorrows. But we are stirred out of our slavery to earth's monotonous quiet, out of our dead satisfaction with this world—stirred to the very depths. It is then, if we have eyes to see, if our heart has still some trust, that something darts into our life which seems to open out a new being before us, if we have the courage to take it up. God makes Himself known as the Ever-near. He bids us take up the hope we have cast away, and embody it in a new life. “Arise,” He cries in our heart, “I am with you. You are free from the slavery of the visible and the world; all the freedom of heaven is before you, all the work of earth to be done, no longer for yourself, but for Me and for your fellow-men.” And then we arise, and know that He has done all things well. Life has no more the ancient freshness of so long ago; but it has a freshness which will endure beyond the grave. It is free from false

craving, the desires of the world are dead. It is a serious, a more peaceful life; but it has its own happiness, more profound and more secure than the wild happiness of old. And then comes death, and in the arms of that gentle friend we say: "God has been ever near to me. He will be nearer now."

Psalm XXIII

BESIDE still waters where the grass
Is sweet and soft, by shadowy trees,
My Shepherd leads my weary feet
To give me ease.

This Shepherd is my Lord, my Love;
I shall not want; and when my soul
Is sick and heavy laden, He
Restores it whole.

In paths of righteousness He guides
My erring steps, and if I go
Through the dark shadowed vale of death
I find no foe;

For He is with me, and His staff
Guides me with love and bids me take
Comfort and joy; and this He does
For His Name's sake.

When in the hungry waste of life
My heart is starved, He doth prepare
His wine and oil for my poor sprite
And plenteous fare.

So, like a stream that sweetly runs
Beside my path from lea to lea,
My Shepherd's goodness year by year
Has followed me.

And I shall dwell, when death shall bring
Me, wearied, to the eternal shore,
In His enclosed fold of peace
For evermore.

The Advent of Jesus

IN this sliding society of ours, when on all subjects that are open to development—such as religion, morals, politics, art, social science—men and women seem to glide and stagger like birds on ice, you might try to gain some clear, main ideas to which you may devote your life, and which are certain; some of those principles which the work of mankind has proved to be true, and which, therefore, your whole soul may swear never to violate, never to deny. You will then

have some of the power Jesus had when he left Nazareth for the work of his life. Think of him as the silent years drew to a close, as he felt that his soul was ready, as he waited for the call. Within him he heard the ideas that he had gained calling to him, like men armed for battle, "Lead us forth." Without him he heard the cry of suffering and longing humanity calling to him, like a starving city, encompassed by its foes, "Come and give us food and rest." As he stood upon the hill-top above Nazareth, alone in the night, as he was wont to do, he heard this present cry, and, as he listened, a passionate desire to embody his thoughts filled his heart. That passion of self-sacrifice for man, which, when it is grown, is the strongest of all passions, rose within him like a great sea! He heard also the whole future calling to him. Dimly he heard it, for that was a voice which was to grow in clearness as life grew into work; but the call dragged at his heart. And so he took farewell, and, not looking behind him, went, a solitary figure, down the hill-road into the plain, having all Christianity in his heart. It was a new beginning to the history of Humanity, it was the advent of Jesus.

Inconstancy of Thought

CHRIST knew that which he believed, and he knew its truth. Steadfast, immovable principles were his. We see them, feel them guiding his whole life; the organic powers under every action, the passionate powers in every speech, in every parable, in every answer he made to those who prayed his help, or to those who denounced his teaching. That self-conviction which, when it is of truth, is so vast a personal power, was his. His whole path lay clear before him, not what was to happen, but what he would, in all events, cling to in life and death. That is a great lesson to this uncertain and wavering generation. It is not only belief in God it needs, it is belief in its own ideas ! I do not complain of slow change—that may be development—and there is a change which seems, but is not, change, when the principles of thought and feeling remain unaltered, but the form into which they are thrown is different. But I do complain of the way—owing to want of clear conviction of the truth of any radical thoughts—that men and women slide in a year, almost in a

month, from one religion to another, from one policy into another, from one view of life into its opposite. That is not inconsistency, it is inconstancy. . . . When the surprises of life come, when the fiercer temptations of life assail them, when great decisions have to be made—then they are all at sea, and wavering like its waves; the victims of the changing winds of the world's opinions, of their friends' affections or their friends' advice, of the last religious fervour in society or of the necessities of their party.

The Power of Creative Thought

IN our Society, where people think, or think they think, about many subjects because they read so variously; and where they feel that they feel so much because the culture of feeling is the fashion; the best word to say is this—that all our thinking and feeling is not only useless, but a source of disease to ourselves and to mankind, unless we get our thoughts and feelings into some plain outward shaping in act or speech or writing—and best of all in act. We are always, otherwise, left in the vague; wander-

ing hither and thither in the fanciful labyrinths of our inner life. We never then know clearly what we think or what we feel. We cannot see ourselves as we really are. This is the unhappy condition of a multitude of men and women; and its root is laziness of mind and laziness or indifference of the affections. For of all things in the world which we have to do, the most difficult is to get into clear shape what we think and feel; but it is also the most necessary thing, and the difficulty should not dash our energy, but inspire it. Indeed, if we would have our intellect, our conscience, our affections, our imagination, our spiritual being in good health, alert, their loins girded and their lights burning, it is imperative on us to overcome that difficulty. Whatever is within you, shape it into clear words or clear action, and as beautifully as you can, so that men, as well as yourself, may see it plainly. Then they will judge it, love it or hate it, praise or blame it, and, when it is good, be inspired by it. Once in form, it can be tested. Then there will be progress in your life.

The Power of Truth

THE land over which we have to march and to contend lies before us in the morning light. It will be no easy task to win it through. We know that it will be one long battlefield, but that the foes and the fighting will lessen in proportion as the battles have been nobly and strictly fought, until at the end there will be nothing left to conquer. To be a good soldier, as Christ was, that is our business, our steady joy, our glorious calling. . . . "Stand therefore," St Paul cries, for if half our life be marching on when the battle is over, half our life is also standing and withstanding in battle; stand therefore, having girt your loins with Truth. There, in the midst of the body, is the strength of a man, woven in and out in knitted muscle and sinew; strength to withstand in wrestling, strength to hold to the ground, strength to heave and overthrow, strength to pursue and overtake the devilish conceptions which tyrannise mankind. It is on the knowledge and conviction of truth that this strength abides and endures. "I know the truth of that for which I fight and stand." It is

a mighty knowledge and it makes might. Truth round the loins of the spirit, and the certainty of its certainty, are the lasting power in the battle for God and man. Failure, to be beaten down in the fight, ridicule, the scorn and defeat of the world, are, if we are convinced of truth, only a passing trouble. . . . He who has girt his loins with great truths is already conqueror of death and hell, and his march is over vanquished lies. . . .

Truth is alive, and cannot lose its vital power. Where it lives, there is energy. Life, as power, spreads from it. Take this one saying of Jesus Christ, embodying the truth that rules the whole spiritual world. "Who-soever shall lose his life, the same shall find it." Think of the incessant changing life, in a million varied souls, of this Word of God; think of its kindling power, its persistent energy, in the life of the whole world. Thought fails and imagination drops her wing before they can realise the thousandth part of the work done by such a sword of the spirit. And this, which is true of a spiritual truth, is equally true of a scientific, of a moral, of an artistic truth. Find these truths—in science, art, politics and religion.

Find the Words of God. And when you have got them, gird them on, draw them in the battle God has ordained, wield them for the sake of the progress and salvation of mankind. Be master of their management: slay with them the falsehoods of the world; defend with them those whom the falsehoods oppress; pierce with them the hearts of men, dividing the evil from the good; separate with them the false from the true, that men may be able to see and choose the right. Let them flash in the forefront of the fight. Let them, above all, flash and pierce, slay and sift in your own heart, till in its cities and its country nothing lives which is not true and pure, beautiful and just, clear in thought and loving in feeling. For you are not worthy to wield the sword of the spirit in the outward world, unless you are wielding it day by day against the spiritual enemies of your own soul.

The Power of Action

ONE of the misfortunes of modern life is the habit, which has grown so much of late years, of keeping our thoughts and feelings within us, vaguely building and unbuild-

ing them in our soul, like clouds; feeding on dreams, and vain of our dreaming. When Carlyle bid us be silent, he did not mean this kind of silence, and he did not himself keep it. He thought and felt a great deal about himself and the world around him, but he got rid of it by shaping it in anything but silence, and then went on to new matter. The one thing mankind most desires is action of some kind, something made, something which has movement and life in it; and the more we give men that, the more their satisfaction and pleasure. The more you shape, the more you will rightly please yourself and the more you will please, also in the right way, the great brotherhood. For a number of men and women are dull and weary. Put some action on their stage, some new thing into form before them. Let them feel life moving before their eyes. Vivify the great drama by creating new scenes, embodying fresh thoughts, and the world will be charmed, helped, comprehensive and grateful. Make one act of love, and you will do more good to men and teach them more of the religion of self-forgetfulness than by a thousand years of lonely thought. We are born to

communicate ourselves to our fellow pilgrims, and when we do it lovingly we fulfil the half of religion. Above all, let there be no delay in beginning; no more dreaming. Life runs swiftly, and it may be over before we have done anything for our companions. If we lose to-day, it is likely to be the same story to-morrow; and days are lost lamenting over lost days.

The Power of Words

WHATEVER good may be in words, or whatever evil, once they are sent forth, the good is done or the evil is done. Words do not die, any more than actions; they are living seeds, and they fall on human hearts and grow in them. What are you sowing? What harvest are you preparing? Flowers or weeds, fruitful corn or poisonous plants? It is an awful question, awful above all when we think that the whole world is better or worse for almost everything we write or speak. "Every *idle* word," said Christ. It is curious, at first sight, that he should choose that idea of idleness in words as the representative evil in them; that he should

not choose malicious or flattering as the adjective. Yet it is rightly chosen. For the idle word, the word which has no work behind it, the meaningless thing—that is the worst word, the most harmful to the user of it, the most harmful to the hearer and the reader. All words are idle which are not controlled by sincerity; which have not behind them the real personality of the man who speaks them; which are not spoken out of his heart and conviction. This does not confuse gay and joyous words, the light salt of conversation, with idle words, for a man may be gay and true. On all subjects worthy of writing about, on all subjects which demand speech from you in public, or in conversation, let your words be the expression of real work, of conviction wrought by thought, the expression of your true self, of what you really are. Let them be sincere, for not only does idle talk tend to penury in your own brain, it infects the whole nation with poverty of thought. For every worthless word—that is, for every word which has not your real self behind it—you shall give an account in the hour of judgment. God will see their work on individuals and on the race at large.

The Power of Love

THE law of the universe is love, and we must be on its side. All the rightness of our life among men, all union with God, all the following of the life of Jesus, our friend and brother, depend on our active obedience to that idea. All the suffering of the world results from man's disbelief in it, from man's disobedience to it. All the joy of the whole world, past, present and to come, has arisen and will arise from obedience to this law. It is the central energy of the spiritual universe, through all the starry spaces, in the heaven of heavens where the great communities abide, and in the infinite will of God. Wherever it is obeyed, joy is present, leaping like a fountain. In daily life it creates the habit of living and thinking for others rather than for oneself, of the active desire to give and bless, of help and sympathy, kindness and graciousness, of self-forgetfulness. With the practice of it, grace and joy and brightness illuminate the face, speak through the manners, irradiate the speech, make beautiful the commonest action, and adorn the trial days of life with unexpected flowers. There

is nothing more enchanting than the brightness of one who is not thinking of himself; and it is even more beautiful in the midst of trouble than it is in the midst of pleasure. It is always quick for gracious play. It has most strange and sweet responses, always ready to give the best it has. It endures in illness; it conquers decay; it makes old age as beautiful as youth; it passes through death with an exultant knowledge that it will be for ever with a Love higher than its own. Love never faileth. He who loves can play, like a child, on the verge of eternity. Nay, he is always at home in eternity. The true lover is himself eternal. He is in God, and God is in him, and God is Love. Therefore, whatever be the seriousness of life, even when it is most grim, the lover is always the possessor of joy, for joy and beauty are the natural and necessary forms of love.

The Importance of Ideals.

It is the fashion to cry up to the stars—in the Press, at every meeting of business men, in books, in societies—the practical, the unsentimental temper; and to cry down

the things of the imagination, the arts, the poetical elements, the passionate enthusiasms, the youthful eagerness after what seems impossible, the aspiration after the ideal life, the hope for Utopias, the effort after conditions of society which seem like dreams, the faith in the invisible things of God and the future life, the optimism which believes in itself, and works, against failure, to realise that in which it believes. Men may cry it down; but it is in the prevalence of such a temper in a people that half its greatness consists. When that temper is growing cold over the whole of society, the nation is entering on its old age, and on a dishonoured old age; when it is dead, the nation is corrupt; when it lives and breathes, the nation is young, and the future is in its power. It is the true, practical temper : the inspiration of work and progress. We may, by living in that temper ourselves, and in spite of the madness of the opponent cry, do our personal best to keep our nation great. I do not decry the honest work of the world, its knowledge, business, commerce, its manifold interests. They are part of progress. But, for the sake of mankind, for its highest life and reach, mingle them with the life

of wonder, with beauty, with invisible faiths and hopes, with impassioned aspiration, with dreams of the golden age, with immortal hopes for the future, with the undying longing of the spirit for God, with the desire of Jesus for perfect righteousness and love, and with communion with the Fatherhood of God—that divine source of life from whom we came, to whom we go.

The Passion for Ideals

WHEN a man is convinced that he has thoughts which will move the heart of humanity, change and regenerate it, he has too much reverence for man, and too much reverence for God, whom he feels to be the source of such thoughts in him, to shape those thoughts in words till they have been perfected, till he can supply them with handles by which men can grasp them and use them. Therefore he is silent until they can spring forth full armed in full growth, like Athena from the head of Zeus, with wisdom in their deep, grey eyes, with power in their hands to weave the web of peaceful action, and to wield the spear and shield of

spiritual war. When thoughts develop in this fashion, they become the charmers of the soul. The faculties and feelings of the man collect round them with admiration and joy, admiring in them, not himself, but God in them. We know that this was the belief of Jesus concerning his ideas. The words he spoke were not his, he said, but his Father's. Therefore we are sure that after a time he began to love the ideas in his soul with an impassioned love, to feel towards them so high an enthusiasm that he was ready to sacrifice his whole life upon their altar, and finally to die for them. The last necessity, then, for getting them into perfect shape was fulfilled. High and noble passion bore upon them. Through deathless passion they took their passionate expression. And so they smote themselves into the heart of the world. It would be well if we could take into our lives and into the education of those we love some of these lessons. Patience in maturing, righteousness of life, silence round our thoughts, afterwards passion burning in them, and then their life, action, shape and use.

Hymn

ALL-LOVING Father, unto whom
Is known my weakness, whom I trust;
Thou who remembr'est, when I fail,
That I am kindred to the dust—
Give to my thought the torrent's speed,
The eagle's wing, the flash of light,
That it may fly, and reach Thy love,
Beyond these realms of night.

Where shall I find Thee? Shall my thought
For ever climb, for ever tire?
Where art Thou? for I am outworn;
Hear me, my God, my deep Desire!
The weary torrent gains the sea,
The eagle drops into her nest,
The lightnings sleep at last; O Lord,
Let me, too, find my rest.

My prayer hath pierced to God—His life,
His holy Power is all mine own;
Into the ocean of His love
The torrent of my thought has flown!
The eagle's wing had failed, but I
Have soared to my serene abode;
Behind me was the lightning left
As I fled home to God.

Are we Dead or Alive?

IN God's eyes, are we dead or alive? Some have ten talents, some five, some only one; but the question is the same for all—"Are we using what we have for God and man?" If we are, we are alive, and the proof of our life is that the powers we possess are growing greater in our hands, and have become reproductive in others. God is receiving His own with increase of it in others. That is life. It is life when we feel that creativeness is becoming more creative, and love more capable of giving, and truthfulness more easy, and sympathy more quick to feel and to express itself; when simplicity is to us more beautiful, and joy is won from a greater number of things, and reverence and humility are more natural to the soul, and excitement more wise, and hope more bright-eyed, and faith more certain, and imagination and invention more readily kindled to their work, and practical ability swifter and keener in its execution of thought. To feel and rejoice in growth in good things, and in enjoyment of the powers they possess and create—that

is to be alive, and nothing in the world is to be compared with it; for along with the quick movement there is peace. It is a full river running at speed, but quiet throughout its depth, and making its waves a blessing as they flow. Be that your aspiration; and while you live for the earth through which your waters stream to fertilize it, let every drop of your river be conscious of the divine ocean to which you go, and in which your life will not be lost, but increased a hundredfold—the ocean of that infinite love which is the life of God.

The Service of God

IT has been too much the fashion to divide the service of God from the work of the world, to call on men to leave all business to follow Christ, as if Christ meant, when he called Peter and Matthew away for a special missionary work, that no one should remain to do the needful works of life, and that no one who did not leave these works could follow him. Thus mistaking a particular call of special men for a universal call to all men, the fatal division was made of sacred

and profane work, as if any work was profane that was done in the spirit of Christ. The true teaching of Jesus was that all work was given to men by God, and was to be done divinely, with love and faith and joy. The true way to serve God in business is not to leave it for idleness of spiritual contemplation, but to do it in the faith that God Himself has sent you into the world to do it; and to reveal, through your doing of it, a part of His character to man. Whatever profession, trade or craft you be, it is God who has given you that work, and placed you there to serve Him in it. It is God's work you do; and He is in you doing it, for the sake of other men, His children. This is the faith which will save you from all wrong in your work, from worldliness in it, from selfishness in it; and make its highest aim, not your own wealth, or your own advancement, but the manifestation in it of all that is God's character—of truth, justice, love, uprightness, reverence for the work itself, so that it may be the very best you can do—and, beyond that, the ultimate direction of all that you do to the bettering, the development and the saving of mankind.

The Burden of Humanity

WITH regard to our faith for man : whatever we believe about his future, we are bound to look as steadily at his present. Now he struggles forward, beset with many woes, enduring many pains, forced, like Hercules, from one great labour to another. Ever visible is his mighty sorrow ! Were we to forget his pain in faith in his perfection, to take no share in it, to neglect our work for him—we should soon lose love in our heart and, becoming dead to feeling, be unable to believe in any far-off happiness for man. Love which feels the pain of men and cannot rest from helping ; Faith which inspires and strengthens love and bids despair begone, because it sees the end—these are the two great powers of our life with man, and one cannot live rightly without the other. Together let them think and feel and act ; and life is victory. These are the things we ought, as followers of Christ, to feel most deeply ; for these minglings of sorrow and joy, and of sorrow finally overwhelmed by joy were the woof and warp of the life of Jesus. In his life for his brothers

Christ bore, like a mother, mankind beneath his breast, suffering with all its pains of growth; but rejoiced also, for he knew that the child would finally be born into joy. In that twofold life he was the image of all mankind. And the Humanity we have known and loved, the ancient, suffering mother—carrying her burden for thousands of centuries—bears it for ever in hope, hope that shall save her in the end. Under her heart lies the new Humanity, growing into life through the pains of the old. Long is the carrying, but the hour shall come when the child shall be born, and nothing of the pain be remembered.

The City of our Soul

You and I possess within a city which day by day is built. Who is the builder, and on what foundations does it rest? The senses are its gates! How are they guarded? Are they fast shut against our evil enemies? The conscience is its market place, where all its food is weighed and sold! Of what kind are the scales used there, false or true; and in its stalls is there wakefulness and

obedience? The reason is its House of Representatives! Who sits in the Speaker's chair? Who carries the day when the parties of right and wrong divide? The imagination sets up its palaces and gardens. With what pictures are they filled? Who are the folk that walk therein? What are the dreams and fancies that lie in its woods or wander by its streams? The faculties, desires, powers, aspirations, all the pleasures and pains of thought, the feelings, the incessant thinkings—these are its houses! Of what kind are they? Built to last for ever, secure against decay, white and pure, with all their windows open to the airs of heaven? Who has built and made it all, wonderful city that it is? Year by year, day by day, it has been wrought, and now it stands within—the image of your very self. Go, walk through its streets, and think on who has built it—God, or your own wild will? And is it He, who, having built it, dwells in its citadel, or that other—your own Liking—who has laid every stone of it? It is easy to answer the question by asking another: “On what foundation does the city rest?” If it rest on the rock of doing righteousness, of hearing and doing the things which Jesus told us were the things

of God; on strict obedience to the laws of Love, and Truth, and Purity—then God has built the city of your soul; and it will resist the earthquakes and the floods of life, and all the storms of evil will not overthrow its walls. But if its foundations are only your own feelings, undirected by righteous will, and not the doing of noble things, only fancies to be good or fancies to be wrong; only your own daily desires, only shifting, changing will—then the whole city rests upon the sand, and walls and gates, palaces and houses, are in mortal peril. Let the rain come, and the flood and the tempest of life, and in a moment it will fall, and great will be its ruin. Weary, unspeakably weary, will be the rebuilding! Yet, it must be done. From year to year, through many a time and times in the eternal world, you will have to clear away the ruin, to set free the ground, to lay again the foundation, so that God with you may build into nobleness that inward city. It is a work which will be spared to none. Now or hereafter you will have to build a perfect city! Do it now. Call your Father now to your side. Lift into lovely and noble proportions the buildings of the soul. Lay to your work

the plummet of righteousness. Say to your will—"Bend yourself under the order and command of God. Obey and know your rightful Lord; *you* are not the architect, but you should be His master builder." While you are here, let the city be finished for eternity.

The City of our Heart

WHEN we go down into the city of our own heart, a city more real than Paris or London, we find ourselves in as great a crowd as that which surges up and down in the huge cauldrons where men furiously seethe together. That crowd within is as restless and as driven, as varied and as passionate, as the crowd without. All the streets of our heart are full and whirling. There is the host of desires rushing to and fro; there the high-hearted nobles and great citizens of the soul. Others are there of lower and fiercer port, others base as criminals; and among them, like warriors, move the great passions, breathing fire and kindling the desires to their work. And there are duties with their lawyers, and impulses from without with their train of vanities

and self-reproaches, and faiths battling with despairs, and arguments clashing with arguments, and memories which waken tenderness or hate; and the children the senses have given to imagination; and the appetites with satisfied or hungry eyes; and driving his haughty path among them all, throned on his golden car, rich with barbaric instincts like gems, the mighty lord of all evil moves on, dark Self-Will, grimly smiling. Pride, his coarse mistress, sits beside him, and the seven sins pull them through the hurly-burly—while, flitting through dim streets, far away from the furious stir, four shadows, half naked and starved, but in whose eyes is sunshine, appear and vanish, vanish and appear—Conscience and Beauty, Imagination and Love, seeking religion and finding her not; and with them, unseen and jostled in the hurry, the angels of the Spirit, hoping, but in vain as yet, that any one of the throng will look up and see the quiet stars and wish for peace. Oh, greater and more unquiet than the streets of London is the wonderful city within !

The Passion of a Great City

THE physical noise of a huge city is perhaps its greatest curse. But greater than this, in its effect on life in general, is the turmoil of passion and thought which meets and mingles there. No sea in a raging cyclone is more tossed and torn, heaves and falls more heavily than the wild ocean of London's thought, blown over by London's passion, in inconceivable variety and incessant movement. Were this to be translated into outward noise, the tumultuous wave of its sound would lay the town in ruins. The overwhelming tragedy of it appals the heart; the tumult of its battle deafens often the powers of the soul. And, from time to time—and frequently in the case of men and women who are deeply involved in the strife—imagination, conscience, the great virtues, the primal duties, the eternal, invisible ideas by which the spirit in us lives, and, above all, the will to do right, are, when they have lived too long in this confused tempest, like sailors after days of hurricane. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then we wish to

hear and obey that which the disciples heard, "Come into the silent country and rest awhile." And there, if we are quiet indeed, and yield to the soft approaches of the eternal things; if we do not carry the city's life with us, our soul is washed clean, as by a swift and crystal stream, of all these noises. In the solemn movement of Nature's life—so still, slow, strong, consistent, firm; so obedient to order; in all its variety, so deep-set in unity; all its powers at ease, and its mightiest powers the most stormless and beneficent—our body and soul are healed into peace, restored and made sane again.

National Welfare

THE temple of God is the nation in which we live. "God be gracious to us and bless us," ought to be the prayer of every Englishman, and its importance ought to transcend every personal prayer. The more in all our prayer we are swept beyond the personal into the national, the better for our moral life, the better for our spiritual being. But then we ought to have a clear idea of what we mean by God blessing us as a nation.

It is not in things material that His blessing lies, not in increased wealth, not in our commerce covering every sea, not in the force of our armies—but it is in the light of His countenance being lifted upon us. And the light of His countenance is in the increase of those things in us as a people which bring light. It is in the increase of truth, in the knowledge and reverence of truth. And first in moral matters—in the full development of the power by which the national and civic conscience sees truthfully and clearly the differences between right and wrong, and beholds right as beautiful and wrong as deadly. And, secondly, in the full development of the power by which the intelligence is illuminated to discern and discover what is true in all the spheres of reason and knowledge; and when the truth is sifted clear, to have the will to revere it and to follow it, no matter into what strife and pain and loss of worldly profit our following it may lead. This is to have the light of God's countenance shining on our nation and our lives—moral and intellectual light. They are both divine. They issue from the eternal source of truth. And the nation in whom they inhere is blest of God. . . .

Magnanimity, which goes with simplicity, is one of the chief matters which form the true life of a people. When a nation has men in it who are simple, quiet, great in soul, firm in great crises and happy in difficulty; undisturbed by success and undaunted in failure; and in the hour of tribulation working without over-care, and enduring with dignified fortitude misfortune and defeat; full of faith in God when others despair; inspired with steady joy when sorrow tries to weaken action—then the nation emerges triumphant, and all humanity is cheered and kindled. Then with this great-mindedness, if a nation is to be great, or a personal life noble, are to be combined those high moral aims which the worship of wealth and power tends to undermine and finally to overthrow. For this is national religion—not to keep up a great Church, or exalt the sects against the Church; not to contend for ritual or against ritual; not to maintain creeds or to cry them down; not to confess ourselves orthodox believers, or fight for power over the souls of men—but to see that right is done to the poor and the oppressed; to be honest in our dealings with one another and with foreign and savage peoples, to

maintain clear the honour of righteousness, truth and justice, to be the leaders in the world of the armies of compassion and loving-kindness, to be the overthrowers of all things in low or high place which are proved to be dangerous to the health of the soul and body of the people. This was the call of the Jewish prophets, this is the call of Jesus to the nation of England. To answer it is of more importance than to have five hundred millions more in the national treasury, to have a new continent in our possession.

Justice : The Life of a Nation

THE one thing we want to-day is the doing of justice in the national, civic and social life of the State; and perfected justice is the shaping into government of truth and love. The curse of all peoples is injustice. The ground of all quarrels and wars between classes and people is covetousness, and covetousness begets injustice. Wherever there is misery and poverty, and disease and crime, and national decay and oppression, at the bottom of all the iniquity and misery against which we are contending to-day lies

injustice—the devil of the world. At the end of all our struggle against evil and misery and shame, against all the diseases of States, sits Justice, the true master of mankind. To do it, to work for it, to attain it all over the world, ought to be the central endeavour of our lives. As we read of the vast wrongs which Governments and Powers are doing to mankind and see, even here in England, the vast misery which tosses around us like a dark sea, whose warring waves are human lives, we are often heart-broken with despair and pain. But, in the midst of it, we, at least, can ourselves do something. We can believe in a righteous Master of the world, who will not free us from the struggle, lest He should pauperize our intelligence, our conscience and our spirit, but who, through reiterated experience, is leading us all into goodness. It is a faith which has a mighty power. It prevents all despair; it kindles all work; it tells us that misery ends in moral strength and holiness; and therefore in joy and beauty. It is the victoriousness of life.

To get full justice done, in the present state of society, means a steady change of the conditions of society, and a complete reversal of the temper and spirit which has

the chief apparent power in it. And this temper, which is now ruling in all classes—the temper of “Everyone for himself, and the devil take the hindmost”—is a mother out of whose belly crawl day by day a thousand reptiles of injustice. Against that temper we have to carry on an internecine war, and one plain, practical way of doing it is for each one of us to do away with injustice in our own lives, never directly or indirectly, by our own act, or by our thoughtlessness or indifference, to do what will injure the life or lessen the goodness, leisure or just pleasure of another, on any pretext whatever, and least of all under the pretext of any form of paternal government. Then—at least before us who are thus living—the larger vision will open its gates. Every local improvement, every step forward, every change from a famine of goodness to an increase of it—and many are such changes in the present time—will strengthen our sense of God’s justice, and our faith in the new heaven and the new earth.

The Love of One's Country

To love one's country is to love its ancient virtues, and hate its ancient wrongs; to mark them out clearly one from another, and live the one and slay the other. It is to pass by with contempt the dark cavern where men worship Mammon; to hold ourselves free from impure living; to seek a simple, quiet, unluxurious but fair life; to rejoice in distributing, not in hoarding or wasting wealth; to fix our thought and effort on the attainment of righteousness in public life and private homes; to sacrifice personal objects to great public aims; to have the courage to attempt what seems impossible through love of the ideals of truth and beauty, and to prefer to die on the field of work and self-devotion rather than to live in idleness and luxury. Moreover, to love one's country, and to shape that part of our religion into life, is to fight against the false theory that the principle of a nation's life is self-interest—when it is self-devotion; and to wage this sacred war in the city and in the country, in our business, on the municipality, as voters and citizens, in our professions, and in our place in Parliament. It is to work for

a national condition which will enable all men to have an equal chance of self-development, and minister to the education of all in the things which are true in knowledge, beautiful in art and nature, sound and sane in intelligence, clear in conscience, ideal in the spirit. It is above all to educate in every class of citizens that spirit of self-sacrifice, which, accepting in the name of God and duty the burdens, diseases and distresses of the body politic, is never satisfied till it has put an end to them.

The Love of Mankind

To love mankind is to love all the ideas on which the progress of the race depends, and to live one's life in their behalf; to devote one's being to them; and to offer on their altar all we are. That is the doctrine of Jesus, and that was his practice. He lived, he died, to bear witness to the lofty truths on which the veritable life of man is established, and by which it moves onward, and shall move for ever. To love man is to love freedom; freedom for the body, conscience, reason and soul of man, but freedom always self-limited by the law of love; to prophesy

freedom, the sister of obedience, over the world; to stand on its side against oppression; to support its causes, whether civil or religious, in all nations; and to allow no national interests, jealousies, no political expediencies, no personal desires, to prevent our allegiance to its flag. To love man is to love the idea of justice, equal-handed, for all men, and to live in behalf of it. It is to love truth, the ground of all interchange of thought, and to live for it. It is to love self-surrender, the ground of all action between men, and to live for it. It is to have, and live for, the simple humanities themselves—the vital, human elements which are common and beautiful in the race. The love of these ideas—the great driving wheels by which the chariot of man's progress rolls in soundless thunder on its upward way—and the action which, if they are profoundly loved, must shape itself from them into daily life—is the practical love of Man, and it is as clear as the day what it means. That is no vague, unoutlined dream; the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. To love these ideas is to do them; and the doing of these performs all the duties of Love to Mankind.

Psalm XXXVI

LORD, from the breast of earth Thy mercy
soars
To pierce the highest Heaven, beyond the
doors
Which close the inner Infinite, where, zoned
With cloud on cloud, Thy Faithfulness is
throned.

Like the strong mountains stands Thy
righteousness,
Like the great deep Thy judgments, which
men bless !
Man Thou dost save, the beasts are in Thy
care,
The earth is sheltered by Thy tent of air.

Soft in the nest of life's immortal tree
Man lies within Thy love, and trusts in Thee ;
Thy fulness fills his heart, and he drinks deep
Joys that like full-fed rivers onward sweep.

For fresh in Thee the wells of life arise,
And, in Thy light, our light the dark defies !
To those who know Thy love, of love give
more,
And more of goodness on the good outpour.

Days of Judgment

WHETHER we believe in God or not, it is plain that there are days of judgment, days when nations and men are sifted, wheat from chaff, wickedness from goodness, folly from wisdom, weakness from strength; days in which warning is given, or punishment exacted, or destruction administered, or salvation gained. At any rate, there is an Order in the affairs of men. Those must indeed be blind who can read history and not see that there runs through it a thread which is knotted at the close. Nations and persons reap what they have sown. Slowly crawls, like a tiger, judgment upon evil; slowly ripens on the tree the fruit which is the lawful result of the seed of good. Both are sure as death. The eternal law of God which grows not old is behind them both, and when they come to man or nation, it is a day of the Lord. Then, for us, in our little lives, for peoples in their lives of centuries, "is the great white Throne set, and the books opened, and on the Throne One, from whose face earth and heaven flee away, and there is no place for them." We do not believe in a visible coming of God to judgment; but we do believe in wrong

being overthrown and right established, and that there is One who does these things; we do believe that there are days of the Lord when whole nations, when we ourselves, are summoned in hours of testing or of trial before God to answer for our deeds. And these days are many. Again and again we behold them in history; again and again we feel them in our own lives. They may take years to accomplish, but in the midst of the years there is a turning-point, in which all the judgment is contained. Quietly they come to us for the most part. No eye sees, no friend is aware of the times when, at a crisis in our life, in the vast and lonely plain of our silent soul, God sets up His Throne, and we appear before Him, and the books are opened before us—the books of our character, where all that we have said and done of good or ill is recorded—and on them shines the terrible and inevitable light of justice, and we are judged! . . . We are in Eternity—when one day is a thousand years and a thousand years one day—alone with God. There is no place for anything, for anyone else. It may be terror, it may be reverent awe, it may be unspeakable sorrow, it may be solemn peace, it may be joy beyond all hope that come with His

presence, but whatever it be, there is nothing else. From His face earth and Heaven have fled away for us, and we know ourselves and Him in loneliness of soul. Out of these hours we come with new knowledge. We have seen ourselves then as we shall see ourselves at death, stripped of all desires, apart from all that encompasses our life and hides our real self; divided from all that enthrals us, even from the purest and most blessed things of daily life. We know what we are. We have also looked on God, and if our hearts are not hardened against Him, we know we have One who belongs to us, and to whom we belong, who is Judge and Father, and who will claim our personality for His own more closely, more vitally hereafter than even He has claimed it now. And even if as yet we have resisted or abjured that knowledge, we, nevertheless, come forth from these days changed men. They have done some work upon us. Never again will earth and Heaven, this material world, nor Time, have the old power upon us. We know they are not the realities we thought them once; nor ever again will ambitions, or passionate desires, or fame, or wealth, or love, or home be what they have been—our very all. This is the revela-

tion, and if it act on us rightly, if we understand it, we know that it means—Set aside for ever all things in your life which will not, which cannot enter into the presence of righteousness, and truth, and love, which are not capable of eternity; and bring into union with God by making them holy, and true, and loving all in your life which you wish to keep. So that when He is there, alone with you, you may see these things of yours in Him, and find them yours for ever. Then, when the final hour comes, and death is with you, or you know that he is coming inevitably, and you gather yourself together to meet the time with courage, and alone, in your love, with God, you see earth and Heaven fleeing away from you, and Time dying, pulse by pulse, like the light of sunset, and the darkness grows, and all the world's love, and life, and business disappear, you will have neither fear, nor sorrow, nor pain to find yourself alone with God, in that judgment day. You are accustomed to solitude with Him, and it is not solitude. The words and the joy of Jesus Christ are yours—"I am not alone, the Father is with me."

The Perseverance of God

THE love of God to every son of man moves always true, steady and persistent to its goal—the salvation and perfection of the soul. He will never cease to pursue the wanderer until He find him. By impulses of soul and sense; by unvoiced words heard in the silence of the hills or in the dead of night; by the sudden kindling of aspirations; by the joy of youth; by success in life; by every divine touch of human feeling; by sudden recollections falling upon us, He seeks us in youth; and if we will not hear, then He seeks us in a sterner way by the later discipline of life. He makes that seeking felt in trial, in exhaustion of excitement, so that joy itself is pain because it has satiety. He seeks us in the storm which lays waste the garden of life; in the voiceless agony of the soul; in the bitterness of hope delayed; in the darkness out of which we cry, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” For if joy will not do anything for us, perhaps pain will. There is something awful, when we are its subjects, in this terrible pertinacity of God; awful in its trial hours; awful at every hour,

when we stop in the midst of joy to think, "I am haunted by the Eternal God. It is no use my contending against Him—He will make me His at last." It is awful, but not terrifying, when we yield ourselves to it. Faith in the perseverance of God is the training which makes heroic hearts. It makes us not only heroic, but also joyful, when we believe in this divine perseverance not for ourselves alone, but for men. Every wandering sheep the Shepherd will seek until he find it. The flock shall be perfect in the end. All shall be brought home on his shoulders, rejoicing; the perseverance of the Charity of God shall look at last upon the whole of mankind folded in the embrace of heaven.

The Surprises of God

THERE have been times in life when we have been strangely surprised, how we cannot tell, into an hour of peace which we know to be divine. Some waft of feeling; or some inward music, touched into melody of thoughts unknown before; or some vision, like those in happy sleep, of mankind in a perfect world, flits like a wandering angel through the soul; and suddenly, inexplic-

ably, its questionings are lulled to rest, the mad desires of the heart are touched to peace. Faith returns; love overflows the spirit; our selfish cravings cease to sting. And hope, as in a glass, shows what we shall be when we have yielded our will to the will of righteousness. Ah, then we know whence we came and whither we are going; and a great peace, as it were of an immortal summer, warms and fertilizes the soul; we seem to walk with Jesus in sweet weather through the fields of Galilee.

The hour does not often come; but it is our little inward holiday, our voyage, while on earth, to the heavenly country, our walk by the river of life pure as crystal, our earnest of the benediction that shall be. We look forward then, that we may capture the joy of that peace. The immortal sea we then behold is not that which brought us hither, but that to which we are bound. In these surprises of God, when there is holiday from the battle, we feel like children who have been men; who have fought and now are released into peace. We hear the voice of Jesus, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you," and in the vision, looking forward, we already enter into God.

Hymn

O God, whose love is near,
 “ Although it seem to stay,”
Be with us through our voyage here,
 And smooth the ocean way.

A deep and dangerous sea,
 On which we sail so fast,
And far away the haven lies,
 Where we would be at last.

Through sad and weary days,
 And watchful nights we stand,
Outlooking from the plunging prow,
 To see the golden land.

Storms beat us back in vain,
 In vain the surges drive;
Still onward through the sunless wastes
 Our labouring vessels strive.

But when the winds are hushed,
 And on the deep is rest,
And faith sees far the heavenly land,
 Where God’s beloved are blest,

Through soft and sunny seas
 Thou waftest us along;
And o’er the deck, the birds of heaven
 Enchant our days with song.

Bide, then, the tempest's shock;
Endure the longest night;
Wait on the Lord; from darkest gloom
Springs up His glorious light.

O God, Thy love is near,
Although it seem to stay;
And heaven's harbourage with Thee
All storms shall over-pay.

The Oases of Life

IT is through the real that we are made conscious of the ideal. It is when we are kindled by the daily beauty of the world, and thrilled by it, that there steals slowly into us a sense of something greater—of sublimity which cannot be expressed; of universal life; of thought that may not be circumscribed; of love that is as a spiritual fire in all things; of an infinite beauty, of which all beauty of air and earth is but the form. In such moments outward nature vanishes away, and we seem to stand alone, uplifted in silent and solemn awe, hand in hand with the invisible and everlasting God. There are those who throw these hours and their emotions away as unfitted for practical life.

I ask you to seize on them, to make their memories the favoured haunts of the imagination, to cherish them as the consecrated holidays of life; to make them the food of the thoughts that kindle feeling in youth, and of the feelings which supply thought to age. Ardour of heart thrives upon them; grows into beauty through them, develops by them delicately and strongly; is ennobled by their company. They break into poetry in youth, they dedicate the beginning of manhood to high aims; they keep middle age free from the curse of worldliness, from over-care and overwork; and they are the exalting companions of old age. Educate your ardour with them, be borne with joy and rapture on their wings into the impassioned world of the imagination, into the infinite world where the spirit is alone with God.

Creative Force

COULD we have full power over self, and inward harmony, we should have creative force; and in the act of creation we should have unbounded joy; the same joy God has when He says: "Let there be light," and

there is light. When we can shape into beautiful form love, thought and harmony, and shape them with easy power—then we shall know what it means to be alive, and at the same time to be at perfect rest. The deepest power of rest lies in the capacity of easy creation. It is our feebleness, our ignorance, our want of life, our inability to give fine form to thought and feeling that make our disquiet. The more of life, the more of rest; the swifter the creation, the more peace; the quicker the spinning of the sphere, the quieter the sphere. The depth of God's repose is in the depth of His inconceivable creativeness of thought and love. This is the rest that remaineth; no sleepy heaven, no annihilated consciousness, no still garden of souls, no folly of death. It is to that haven of rest that we poor, unquiet folk are voyaging onward through the tumbling seas; and when the faith in it is greatest, and the labour for it strongest, then we are most happy in our work on earth. So the vision at the end is a great activity of power and harmony and life, moved into incessant creativeness by the thought and love of God in us and in the universe. This is the rest of intensity of life; such as, in unfrequent hours, we have now

and then on earth, when in fulness of being we do all things well, and do them with delight.

Beauty

BEAUTY is far too much neglected. It never belongs to criticism; it ought by right to be always bound up with creation. What it is is hard to define; but whenever anything in nature or in the thoughts and doings of man awakens a noble desire of seeing more of it; kindles pure love of it; seems to open out before us an infinity of it which allures us into an endless pursuit; stimulates reverence, and makes the heart leap with joy—there is beauty, and with it always is imagination, the shaping power. The capacity for seeing beauty with the heart is one of the first necessities for life in a living world. When you see it, you always see more and more of it. And the more you see it, the more love and reverence you will feel in your heart; and the less you will care to criticise, and the more you will care to create. The world needs it now, and the glory of it, more almost than anything else, for nearly all the world has lost

the power of seeing it. The monied men want it; the scientific men want it; the artists themselves have of late betrayed it; the business men want it. The middle class and the aristocracy are almost destitute of it; the working men abide in conditions in which its outward forms are absent. To give them the power to see all that is lovely in nature, in human thought, in art, and in the noble acts of men—that is a great part of your work, and you should realise it and shape it day by day.

Waiting for Light

THE voiceless, passionate yearning of the spirit of man for light—what a power it has ! No man, in whatever darkness, strove with his whole nature towards light, and lived in love for men and women, who did not in the end bring to his side, in Pentecostal revelation, the Spirit of Truth. If you can yet believe in God, though all your creeds have tumbled into ruin; if still you can feel the love of Christ, though the doctrines men have built up around his person exist no longer for you, let then your attitude in these waiting

hours be that of the Apostles—the attitude of prayer and supplication. Throw yourself, with the claim of a child, upon God, the Father of lights. Give yourself to the following of Jesus, in and out among men, in love of him, in expectation of his kingdom in your heart. Then, in time, the mighty wind of the Spirit will clear your heaven of clouds. Fire will fall on your soul and kindle your life into the activities of love. Yet there are others: those who cannot pray, who despair of truth. “I cannot pray,” they say, “since I have lost all faith.” Naturally, but remember that it is not faith in doctrines or creeds which is then required—but not to give up the battle—to hold fast the secret hope of victory, which arises, like a prophet, in the darkness of life, and urges you to answer its call with courage. To yield to that urging, to cling to its hope as the sailor clings to his rudder in the hurricane, is all God asks of you then. We cannot spend our time of doubt in prayer like the disciples, but we can at least refuse to give up the strife or to despair of light. I do not believe such prayer—for such perseverance towards the light is prayer—can remain unanswered. Your waiting will pass into assurance. The

Spirit of Light and Life will come, rushing to make you at one with his joy; and with fire in your heart and on your tongue, you will cry out with a quiet happiness: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

The Simplicities of Life

THE simplicities of life are perennial streams. Live in your cottage by their side, and their sweet flowing will be the good and beauty of all your days. It is not difficult for youth, and it should not be difficult for those who are older, to win the power of enjoying these simple and common things of nature and of life, for they are in truth the divine and beautiful things. The complex and curious things are not divine, for they are not purely human; not perfectly beautiful, for they are exhaustible. As we penetrate into these common things of nature and man, as we go on living with them, they grow brighter and brighter, more and more varied. As we penetrate into and live with the remoter and difficult things, they grow wearisome, less and less varied. There is as much difference between the strange

and sensational scenery of nature and human life, in which a diseased ardour loves to roam, as there is between an artificial garden full of exotic flowers and the gracious universality of the grass of the field. The garden is but rarely seen, and we tire of it in a month. The grass spreads everywhere in soft and satisfying beauty; and in every place—beneath the trees, among the rocks, beside the stream, in nooks of the hills, on far-spread plains, in narrowing combs—is always different, and yet in difference is lovely. It is so with simple things, and with their joy and love. Once we have found their love, once we can enjoy them—our ardour for them, and the reasons of that ardour, grow day by day. And age, even in decay, keeps to them as fervent a spirit as youth, in its brightness and life, bestowed upon them.

The Garden of Lovingkindness

THERE are plenty of persons who work night and day oppressed with the pain of the world, and weary with their fighting. England is crowded with these, but in England there are not too many who have the blessed

gift of the childlike heart, who can make us taste the air of early innocence, who can lead us into the garden of lovingkindness when we are weary with the cruelties of life; give us roses washed with the dew of happiness, when the sorrow of the world lies heavy on our hearts; who believe in us when we doubt ourselves; who, when we are tormented with self-thought, can teach us unconsciousness of self; who, when we are wearied with the dryness of facts incessantly analysed, can bring us in a moment by their smile and look into the magic world where wonder is always present, and imagination sees the face of God. When we walk in their garden and begin to love its flowers of the heart, we shall come slowly to understand that these lives are precious as fine gold to the labour of the world; and gratitude will fill our soul. Refreshing thoughts will cheer our toiling and spinning, and add to it the grace it sorely needed. And then humility and gentleness, born of this soft intercourse with the flowers of human love, will redeem our work from the dryness or rudeness which impairs its influence on men; and from the pride which, when it repels men from companionship with our toil, isolates us into

uselessness at last. So will our nature be completed.

It is the active work of Jesus on which men chiefly dwell; but if you look, in the quiet hours of the heart, into his life, you will find as much of that side of life which the flowers of the field of man are forced to live, as of the other. How quiet it all was, how gentle, how unknown! For thirty years his feet brushed in silence, doing no work such as men call work, through the meadows of Nazareth, where the flowers grow more thickly in the grass than in any other part of Palestine. As he looked on them day by day they taught to him their secret, and well he lived their lesson. To love and to draw men to love one another—that was his work; and it is the greatest that is done under the sun, as quiet as a flower, as fair and appealing in the eyes of men. Mostly, it was the daily sweetness of his life which healed the heart of the world; the forgiveness and the pity which he gave to the sinner, the infinite faith he had in the goodness of man as his Father's beloved child; the tender hand he stretched out to those whom the religion of his day cast out; the lovingkindness which blest the little children and enchanted motherhood; the

pity which, in the teeth of the world's reproof, loved the sinful woman and the publican into goodness and joy again; this and much more was the full half of his life, the life of one who neither toiled nor spun as men now toil and spin.

Hymn

WHEN the Lord of Love was here
Happy hearts to him were dear,
 Though his heart was sad;
Worn and lonely for our sake,
Yet he turned aside to make
 All the weary glad.

Meek and lowly were his ways,
From his loving grew his praise,
 From his giving, prayer :
All the outcasts thronged to hear,
All the sorrowful drew near
 To enjoy his care.

When he walked the fields, he drew
From the flowers, and birds, and dew,
 Parables of God ;
For within his heart of love
All the soul of man did move,
 God had his abode.

Lord, be ours thy power to keep
In the very heart of grief,
 And in trial, love.
In our meekness to be wise,
And through sorrow to arise
 To our God above.

Fill us with the deep desire
All the sinful to inspire
 With the Father's life.
Free us from the cares that press
On the heart of worldliness,
 From the fret and strife.

And when in the fields and woods
We are filled with nature's moods,
 May the grace be given
With thy faithful heart to say,
"All I see and feel to-day
 Is my Father's Heaven."

What Have We Done?

THE Kingdom of God is the kingdom that endures, and this is the kingdom to which you may belong, if you will give up the means of evil to work out your thoughts and take the means of God. To be one of that pure

and quiet and loving assembly ought to be enough for us. Life is fleeting, and it is scarcely worth while, unless an inward power of genius drives us, to fill it with the labour after fame which, when we have gained it, passes from our hands. It is never worth while to fill our life with selfish effort, with the toil for wealth; but it is worth while to fill it with love and righteousness, with meekness, and with peace-making, with humbleness of heart, with hunger of soul for God, with faithful work for God and man. In a short time, most of us who have reached the middle way of life will find their feet stumbling among graves. Those who are now bright and young will have ripened into years, sadder without, but, I trust, more joyful within; and a little while more, and there will be nothing left of us here but a few green spaces in the burial places of earth, the date of birth and the date of death. The question remains—How has the space been filled during which we lived? What have we been, and what have we done? Have we manifested God's kingdom in the world, or have we hidden it, or have we defiled it? Have we worshipped the devil, or worshipped the Lord our God, and served Him alone?

On the answer given to the question depends the enduring or the perishing of our influence on the human race.

A Holiday for the Soul

It is not ill for the youth and girl to go forth into the stir of life to drink of the waters of unblamed excitement, to be filled with their bright youth and to enjoy it; but in the swift movement of it all take sometimes a holiday for the soul. Think of the quiet country of God of which you are a child. Do not forget to walk and muse sometimes beside the sorrowful river of humanity, that you may remember your brotherhood with the suffering world whom your Master loved even to death, so that in the transient joy you may not forget the things of love and goodness which are eternal—so that, when the time comes, your youth may pass into noble womanhood and manhood justly and harmoniously developed for the service of God and man. And when, having ended youth, you have entered into the full life of the world, take with you the same power of meditative withdrawal into the silent country

of the soul, there to rest awhile. Let there be times of quiet in the silence of God. Seclude a holiday for the spirit, when you may recall to consciousness the deep foundations of life; understand what is transient and what endures; divide what is important and needful from the needless and the unimportant. Oh, hear the voice of God speak to you of the infinite, the invisible, the goodness which cannot die, the faith which conquers, the hope which is not ashamed, and the love which creates for ever. Your work, when you take it up again, will be all the better—less noisy, more fruitful, less tyrannic. Let the world slip for a time; wonder and wander with Christ into the spirit's country; make a holiday for the neglected soul.

Solitude

WHEN we are driven into solitude by weariness, or by inward trouble, or by the stress of consuming thought—how do we feed our solitude? Sometimes it is by again brooding over that which has driven us away from men, by recapitulating our sorrow and our wrong; by embodying our self and asking it to devour us. Sometimes we strive

to lose ourselves in work, in plodding viciousness of work, while all the time our trouble underflows the work and never ceases to afflict, so that the work is itself a part of the disease. Sometimes we turn to excitement and nourish that within, until we cannot bear at last that it should not take form, and we flash back to life again and make the inner excitement outward. Those are evil or useless ways of using loneliness. There is but one way of using it well. It is to pass in its hours out of ourselves into union with that which is greater, nobler, more glorious than ourselves—so that we and all our trouble and wrong are lost in reverence, love and adoration. An hour a day like that, in which we live wholly disunited from our craving, brooding, stinging, devouring self borne away on the joy of love, at one with infinite Nature and the eternal love of God, is like a draught of the elixir of life. This was the use Christ made of solitude. He went into the stillness of the night, beneath the starlit skies. There the mighty world of thought which is the life of Nature, the God who thinks therein and instantly takes form to us in all that the senses receive, poured itself into Jesus, and then took him into

Himself. The whole eternity of God's creative life, rushing in inconceivable swiftness, but calm from its very speed, entered into his heart, and lulled it into rest.

Hymn

OFt as in a vernal woodland,
When the western spirits blow,
We may hear the flowers unfolding,
And the grass and forest grow;
So when in my house I ponder,
And at eve the land is still,
Lord of all, I seem to listen
To the working of thy will.

Like a mighty river streaming
Peaceful with the night and stars,
Underneath our stormy passions,
Under all our foolish wars,
Age by age it makes our tumult
Into harmony and strength;
Bearing all our death and failure
To creative life at length.

Lord, when sin and strife and trouble
Toss me like a breaking wave,
When the passions and their craving
Seek me for their foolish slave,

When the folly or the sorrow
Or the pain of man is loud,
When the tyrants, wealth and pleasure,
Urge along the foolish crowd—

Then, Almighty Father, grant me
On that quiet stream to move,
Where thy Will, in vast procession,
Flows in all-creating Love !
Trouble then and doubt and sorrow,
Fear for mankind cannot be,
Nor the noises of the nations
Touch me, sailing there with thee.

Prayer

THE human foundation of Prayer is the natural thirst of the heart towards the Highest. There is an endless longing in the soul, a deep gulf opened in the forum of the city of the inner life that will not close for all the worldly gifts which we throw into it so recklessly. Only God can satisfy the longing; only the surrender of the heart to Him can fill the gulf. Man is too great to have peace except in union with the Highest. His truer instincts reject as food for the spirit

the things of the senses, appetites and intellect alone. . . . Prayer keeps the spiritual life fresh and active, by keeping it dependent upon God; keeps the heart ever on the watch by continually recalling Christ to mind. It is the polish of the spiritual armour; it is the echo of the inner voice of the spirit of God pleading with us. Without it we lose our union with the life which, running through all the veins and feeding every nerve of spiritual Being, keeps our feeling of Right and Wrong sensitive; without it we lose that union with the Light within which keeps our judgment true. It is because we continually need to be recalled to this duty and want of the soul that trials come. (Nothing is to be relied on till it is tested; nothing can be depended on till its weaknesses are known. It is by failing under tests that we find out our undefended positions, and learn to fortify them. One by one we discover where they are and make them strong, till, at last, by the discipline of trial, the castle of the soul is made impregnable. God treats us as the storm wave treats the breakwater. The tempest does not wish to rend the stones asunder and make a ghastly breach; it does not desire to ruin

the goodly ships which ride within; but it must do its work of proving—it must point out the ill-knit places where the thought of the engineer or the skill of the workmen have been at fault. Else how, in future, shall the ships ride safely in the harbour? God does not wish to pain us, to shatter our heart, to sink the hopes and joys which ride like ships on the waters of the soul. But He does wish to make us strong, to teach us where we are weak, to save the hopes and joys which ride like ships in the haven of the heart. And the means whereby we win the power to repair our heart and make it strong is prayer. In finding out our own inability, we are driven to Him who is able to save to the uttermost those who come to Him. We throw ourselves in all our failure upon the omnipotence of God's love. "Thy grace, Thy power, Thy watchfulness—make them mine," we cry. "Unite me to Thyself. Come, and dwelling with me, make strong my soul." Thus does trial produce self-knowledge, and self-knowledge Prayer. This is the education of the Christian life; and because it is continuous, therefore, says the Apostle, "Pray without ceasing." "Impossible!" we cry; "we cannot be always kneeling in

prayer.” Prayer itself is not the outward form alone. It is inward far more than outward. It may be uttered, but its deepest work is often voiceless. Do you take your daily path through the world, constantly appealing to God; with the profound and solemn sense of His presence with you, so that in all difficulty and temptation, on the exchange, in your room alone, at your desk, when receiving friends, when in society, when you do your household work or take your holiday, you ask yourself—“Am I hand in hand with God, ruling all my life in obedience to His will?” Then your life is a life of prayer without ceasing. . . . Men have put prayer aside, argued about its use or its possibility; demonstrated, as they say, its absurdity. It is all in vain. They dash their heads against the human heart. Not till they do away with sorrow and joy, with failure and success, with mystery and melancholy, the passions and the effort of earth, with Humanity itself, and then with God, will they destroy the instinct and the usefulness of Prayer.

The Thirst for God

WE thirst for a God who is alive to us; who is conscious of His own being, and of ours; who has a character, and desires that we shall be at one with it; who has a will which mingles with our will, and leads it straight to Himself; who loves with a love the same in kind with our love when it is self-forgetful; and who is pouring into our whole nature the stream of that love, with a personal touch in it, arranged and fitted to our distinct character. This is our thirst for the living God. . . .

From the depths of the central light where Love sits throned, and thrills from thence through all the universe of matter and of spirit, these mighty waters of God's being flow—justice and righteousness, truth and pity, knowledge and beauty, love and fatherhood—to satisfy the thirst of man. The sage drinks them and the little child, and both are satisfied, for both can love. Healing and life, joy and perfection are in their gay and glorious waters. Their streams make glad every little city of God which in each separate soul is built within us for eternity. They

make glad the greater city, that vast and varied *civitas Dei*, which is now building, stone by stone, life by life, in the human race; and in it, when it is finished, they will flow for evermore.

The Sense of Sin

DEEP down in the heart of man lies the sense of sin. We may ignore it, or treat it lightly, or explain it away, or forget it for many years, but it rises in reproach from time to time, and often it is a torment and a fear. If we have done much evil, it rushes at last in thick darkness upon us. If, on the contrary, we have lived a decent life, we still feel, when in a retreat of thought we are alone with ourselves, that we are out of harmony with the universe, that He whom we call our God is not at one with us—and then we know our need. To this vast disturbance in the heart of man Christ Jesus brought the power of forgiveness. And his message fell on the misery of simple men like rain upon a dry and thirsty land; as now it falls on us, when, out of the depths of the lonely sorrow of our sin, we cry:

“God, be merciful to me a sinner.” Deeper even than the sense of sin in man lies the desire of peace in the satisfaction of his aspiration to perfection. There is that in the profoundness of the human spirit which thirsts for ever till it finds the infinite; peaceless till it fills itself with the very life of God. All over the world, in truth ever since the beginning until now, the same hunger for infinite peace, for satisfaction in perfect good and happiness, cries out of the depths of the heart: “Fill me to the brim with life, with life so strong and deep that I may know I am at rest.” For nothing will ever satisfy man’s deepest desire but absolute perfection, nothing will give him life enough but the everlasting life of God, and the life of God is Love.

Idolatry of Pain

AT Easter-time, as at Christmas-tide, our thoughts are borne into a world of joy beyond this sorrowful surface; and whatever be our outward pain, we are filled within with rejoicing. It is laid upon us as a duty that life ought to have a basis of joy. It was so

with Jesus. None suffered more than he; but in the depths of his spirit there was always rapture, always the song of the heavenly host. Below the pains of our outward being lies deep the joy which is the true foundation of life. It is a lesson and a truth which is too far away from us. In the world in which we live, we encourage the opposites of joy, and lose half the use of life. We weigh ourselves down with burdens of sorrow which are the results of our selfish thoughts and selfish desires; and every one of these burdens lessens our power to live righteously in ourselves, and to live usefully for others. Terrible as the suffering of men and women is, in this world, more than half its worst elements arises out of their wilful indulgence in self-torture. Most of our pains would be cleared away if we would let ourselves alone; if we were human enough and divine enough to have our highest interest and excitement, like that of the angel hosts, in the good and happiness of others than ourselves. God is blamed for our misery; fate is blamed; anything is blamed but our own self-involvement. The true thing to blame is our own gloomy, greedy self, hugging our pain like a fetish, worshipping it within,

sacrificing to it, like a savage, one natural joy after another, one use of life after another. The idolatry of pain and grief—whether it be personal, or that common pretence of sorrow for the miseries of man—is one of the most debasing of idolatries.

The Spirit of the Cross

THE spirit of the Cross lives in men, and wherever it is found it does its work. It draws us out of evil by its loveliness, and when we are convinced of its beauty, we rise out of spiritual death. We can all, in following Christ's life, reveal that God is love, and save men by love. We can all be atoning persons. Put aside all the difficulties the intellect has woven round the doctrine. Do not seek to reduce it to a scheme, do not bind up its beautiful, simple and natural tenderness in logical propositions. It refuses to be bound. It is infinite, for love is infinite. See it in its human and divine simplicity; do not call it a doctrine, call it a law; see it as the perfect fulfilment of the common law of love, whereby all redeeming, comforting, healing and blessing work has been done on

earth and will ever be done in heaven. Then accept it as the law of your life and you will begin to live. And as you live by it and in the doing of it, you also will become an atoner in the same way that Christ made atonement. You will know the meaning of being saved by Christ, of being redeemed by his death, of being cleansed from your sins by him, of being made at one with God by him; of fulfilling in your own life his salvation, of being yourself, through him, through dying to self in love, the Saviour of men, the cleanser of them from sin, the atoner of them to God. And as you grow up into him in this life, the beauty that eye hath not seen, nor heart imagined, will be yours. You will know, at last, in all its meaning, the import of the text—"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me."

Hymn

ETERNAL Life, whose holiest Child to-day
Entered the rapture Thou dost always know,
And, loving, left us the immortal May,
Conquest of death, and evil's overthrow.

Set our affections on the things above;
Dead to ourself, to weakness and to sin,
While on our toilsome journey to Thy love
We pass, on pilgrimage, from inn to inn.

Our life is hidden, Lord, within Thy life :
And when the mists are cold and loud the sea,
When the heart fails, and close and fierce the
 strife,
Pour into us our life that waits in Thee.

So shall we, while we tread the painful earth,
Sing like the morning stars, and Easter be
Ours every day, and travail end in birth,
And all our dead go forth to Galilee.

And, at the last, when death unties our clay,
Claim as Thine own the Life Thou gav'st of
 old ;
Waken, and lift it to the nightless day
Where Jesus meets us by the heavenly fold.

The End?

It is hard sometimes to feel the end in the
midst of our trouble ; for, as one year follows
another, so follows one sorrow on another.
We cannot but think, at every anniversary,
unless the brightness of youth is with us, of

all that is gone, of the love we have given and received and parted from, of the failure of hopes and the dimness of ideals, of the lessening of power, of the friends now no more who once gathered round the blazing hearth—ship after ship gone down and we drifting on alone! Whither? we cry; and there are those who answer, “We do not know,” and others who, more bold, reply, “Over the cataract to nothingness.” Those are not answers we accept; answers, on the contrary, that we deny. Were we to accept them, no high creative joy for man would be left in life. We sorrow enough; but it were to double sorrow upon sorrow, if we were to believe that all mankind but passed across a stage, played out a tragedy, and fell on the other side into a voiceless depth. That we should perish might be borne. The individual might well conceive the sacrifice of his personal consciousness to the conscious life of the whole of man; but that all men, from Christ on the Cross, through every stage of greatness and badness, to the blackest murderer of the souls of men, should meet annihilation of all intelligence and love and personality—this deepens every personal pain and blackens our little life tenfold in blacken-

ing the whole of humanity. That is not our belief who have known that Jesus is alive for evermore, and that as the Master is, so shall his brothers be. We know this when we have risen from a spiritual death of selfishness and sin into a new life of love and righteousness; and when we know it for ourselves we rejoice in knowing it for our fellow men, even for those who know it not. Day by day our inward life deepens; day by day the things which make for death fade away. We grow into the power of the Resurrection. Our years of failure we find turned into power; our sins have been replaced by their opponent goodness; our sorrows have been turned into joy; our work has lost its selfishness; our religious life thinks no longer of its own salvation, but of the salvation of the world. The deepest basis of our life at last is joyfulness.

The Wages of Self

NOTHING is more common than laziness—the laziness that arises from self—and the warnings of the great Worker ought to come home to us. They are grave and stern

enough, and strange to say, they have but little mercy in them. It is not death to die, but it is death to live without using one's self, without usefulness to the world. The wages of self, like the wages of sin, are death; and they are paid, not only in the outer world, but now, day by day, hour by hour. There is not a day of idleness for which the skeleton king we serve does not give into our bosom something of himself, and he gives good measure. No pay-master can be more generous or more certain. As we go on serving him, he doubles and trebles his wage, until, one by one, all our powers, graces, gifts, faculties, affections, intellect, invention, capacities for work and help and loving-kindness are filled with death. We move among men and seem alive. But we are a living death. In the home of the soul, on its solitary plains, there are nothing but dead bones. And we hear a voice saying, "Son of Man, can these bones live?" And the answer is—"Lord God, Thou knowest." Yes, only He can know. And if, in the midst of our dead, there be one faint desire living (which moves like a searcher for some loved one over a battle-field, among the corpses of all that selfish sloth has slain within us,

mourning bitterly), let it cry aloud to God—"Come from the four winds, O Love, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." And if that prayer be strong, then, in a rushing wind, which brings the pain of life upon its wings, God comes to make us alive.

The Divinity of Man

THE main purpose of Christ's teaching is not only to save us from sin, to bring peace to the conscience, not only redemption, but also to sanctify and ennoble us, to develop into excellence all the powers of our being by its light and life, to bring into radiance and beauty the common things of life, so that every kind of life may be full of joy. All that was divine in the human spirit, in humanity, learnt, at last, that it was divine, that its source was God, and in Jesus ascended to God. It was a wonderful and blessed revelation for the world of man when an authoritative voice declared that all the noble impulses, the deep emotions, the high imaginations, all the acts that saved through love, all the sacrifices by which great human causes were victorious, all the truth, justice,

pity and purity of man were absolutely, in their source, divine, might ascend to their fountain-head in God, and claim their union with Him. For this was the sorrow that weighed heaviest on man, that he was not sure, since these divine things in him so easily slipped away into undivine things, since their efforts were so broken, since it seemed so impossible to bring them to perfection, that they were really divine, that they made him akin to God. Christ took that sorrow away. "Your nature is divine," he said. "I and my Father are one, and I am a man like you. You and your Father are one in me. In union with my humanity all these powers in you will run like angel messengers up to God." This was a working hope and faith; a new force born in the soul of mankind; a greater thing, indeed, than all miracles and signs. No one can tell the mighty impulse given by Jesus to the progress of humanity.

The Soul of Nature

THERE are some places on earth so beautiful that whenever we think of them we are lifted into the temper of a poet. Nature has

worked in them like an artist, and they speak to us not only of the spirit of intelligence which abides and works in her, but of the spirit of Divine order, and, most, of the spirit of loveliness which rejoices to shape itself in her. We seem, in seeing these landscapes, to enter into the soul of Nature, and to realize that she, like us, possesses imagination. And when we revisit them, allured again and again by their beauty, it is not the old impression which we then receive, but another, altogether fresh, as if the place had many moods and many capacities of character. When we become conscious of their astonishing variety, of their change, and of the stream of numberless impressions proceeding from them, we begin to realize the infinity of Nature, and seem, in realizing that infinity, to be conscious also of an infinitude in ourselves. We become aware of an infinite in us as of an infinite in Nature; and these two infinities, rushing together in our spirit, lift it into that world of creative imagination in which new thoughts with their attendant emotions are incessantly born in us, like stars which, as night deepens, glow one after another in multiplying multitude out of the violet sky.

“Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground”—that should be the attitude of the soul by the sounding sea, or on the solemn hills, or in the rejoicing wood as it listens to its streams. As we look and muse, the senses receive the charm of the lovely and solemn things; the imagination combines their images, and adds to them human love and memories; the soul rejoices in the play. Beauty strikes her harp, and the brain kindles and dances to the tune; but if you would lift the natural vision into its eternal reality; would you see and hear what mortal eye and ear cannot distinguish—the rushing of the immortal life through all that breathes, the love whose smile kindles the universe—send forth your spirit from yourself to mix with deity. Feel the musical soul of divine thought and love which is moving everywhere; pass with hallowed awe and joy into the character of God revealed in, and making, the outward world. It is not a lifeless and loveless Nature which then is our companion, whose eyes strike cold and grey on imagination, but Nature thrilling with life and love. We feel with a new and added joy her life and love answering to the life and love in us, and with almost a personal

touch in their reply. And the personal touch in her is not only the reflection of our own personality; it comes out of the will of God in Nature. We feel in her not only life and love, but a Being and a character.

The Secret of Nature

WHAT makes, what lies behind the universe: what is Nature? Science only plays on the surface of that; leads us up to it, and abandons us at its gate. The effort to solve this secret has made every Nature-myth, and in that form has run like a river through the stories of the world and all the religion of the world. Through every description of Nature in poetry it seems to rise like a veiled figure, and to call on us to lift its veil. Its curious smile peeps from behind every Nature-philosophy. It gives to every religion a special note, heard high and keen and alluring, among all the intellectual jangle of doctrines and creeds. It is one of the strange, indefinable elements which, below all the accurate imitations of Nature in art, rises up in the work of the great painters, sculptors, musicians and architects, and which gives

their work its mystic cry, its spiritual attraction, its something which is not in imitation; but the imaginative charm of which beckons us on into a world beyond the senses, where things do not appear but are. And the greater the artist, the more of the allure-ment of the secret of Nature appears in his work. We feel it, though we may not shape our desire of it, like the artist. What do we hear in the sound of the sea, or the wind in the tree-tops—what, which does not strike on the mortal ear, but, rising from the sound, strikes on the heart? What looks at us from the mountain range against the evening sky, and from the eyes of the morning?—what from the whole, and from every part of the whole? We cannot tell; but we know its charm, its fear, its thrill—the secret which beckons, disturbs, enthrals, allures and feeds imagination. . . . We seek the secret of Nature, in its thousand forms, all our life long with a passionate ardour. There are few things which more kindle our desire, insist on our pursuit, and are more full of the wild satire of secrecy. And then I am told that of this secret we are to know no more, and find out no more, than we can do in the flitter and flutter of sixty years—sixty years!—a sigh, a breath, a dream by a camp-fire,

the flight of a bird through a summer room, the lifting of an eyelid. Why is the infinite laid before us if we are so finite, or why do we conceive the infinite and then whistle ourselves down into unconsciousness, out of all power of conceiving it, in a few years? A man must have lost every vestige of feeling for all that belongs to the powers of imagination, to every art, as well as to every religion, before he can be satisfied to be the victim of that absurdity. Our sixty years leave us only on the first step of the great flight of stairs which lead up to the Temple door. We gain but an inch on the ascent. I hope we shall move faster in the far days to come. I think, if we make ourselves worthy pursuers, we may, when death opens the way, move onwards more rapidly than on earth. We are so hard bestead here that I think we shall be pushed on hereafter under happier conditions—find out more easily, and have more life in the finding, when we cross the river. But even then, however much we discover, there will always be enough of the secret of Nature—which is the secret of God's creative thought—to make eternity delightful. Therefore, living and dying, and in the life to come, I will pursue and overtake and divide the spoil of secrecies.

Seed Time and Harvest

GOD makes nothing here perfect at first, but everything for perfection. A few wild wreaths of nebulous matter to begin the beautiful earth on which we wander; a solitary tent pitched in Canaan by a self-exiled man, to be the source of the Jewish nation. A tender child born in a retired village, a life of thirty years hidden from the world in a lonely town, a despised ministry of three years, a death upon a shameful cross: that was the origin of the new life of the world. Twelve poor and unlettered men, a band of reformed publicans, Pharisees and workmen—in all, not more than 120;—this was the seed from which the Church of Christ, the mightiest harvest the world has seen, has grown over all nations and all lands. As in this universal Church, so in each member of it; God's perfect kingdom in our hearts begins in secret smallness. A rush of love bursting forth in tears rose into the perfect love of the Magdalene; the sob of the contrite heart, one effort of duty for Christ's sake, one ray of light from Heaven received by the spirit in humble recognition, one passionate desire to die at Jesus' feet, one

solitary prayer when the heart is breaking with remorse and love combined, and that is begun in us which God, by His Spirit, will bring—blade, and leaf, and ear—to the full corn of Christian perfection. A noble life is a gradual result: faith, love, pity, purity are things that slowly grow into flower; they begin with a seed, they have the same vicissitudes, the same trials, the same dangers. The older we grow the more we know that goodness is won step by step, and that every step is but for a very little way. We grow up into Him in all things, says St Paul.

The Fruits of Harvest

WHEN the time of the year's harvest comes, think whether you have brought forth anything which will be as bread and wine and oil to men, for which men may thank you in their hearts, which shall nourish them when you have gone away. Do not think how you shall reap the fruits of your work for your own use. To labour for that end is to end in fruitlessness. Work for a harvest that others shall reap, as others in the past have worked for you. Then, your reward, the real harvest

you shall reap, will be a heart full of love, of self-forgetfulness, of joy in the joy you will bring to others, of union with the character of Him who never reaps what He has sown. In that experience we shall touch the point where autumn brings before us the life our real self is living now in God, the life of which we shall be conscious when we are perfect in the spiritual world. The harvest there will be the garnering and giving forth of the results of our work for the blessing, joy and redemption of all who need these gifts. The harvest there will be the full fruitage of those thoughts and passions which in us were noble upon earth, but which could not come to their perfection. The harvest there will be the reaping of the work and thoughts of others, of the high emotions they have known and felt. We shall give and we shall receive with equal joy. Our sheaves will be with us, and we shall share the sheaves of others. When everyone gives all he has, all shall have enough.

Psalm LXV. 5-14

O GOD, the Saviour of the world,
Within Thy righteousness is furled

Wonders to show to me;

Who art the hope, in bitter woes,
Of all the ends of earth, and those
Who sail Thy spacious sea.

Who, girdled with immortal power,
Hast, in Thy long creative hour,
Set fast the mountain forts,
And stilled the raging of the deep,
The storms that o'er the nations sweep,
The wars of crowds and courts.

The signs that mark Thy holy law
To utmost peoples bring Thine awe!—

The outgoing of the morn,
The sun's majestic advance,
Evening's decline, the starry dance,
Thy praise and power adorn.

Thou visitest the earth to bless
Its hills and vales with righteousness;

The waters that have birth
In heaven, Thy joyous rivers are;
And fattening corn, spread fresh and far,
Their happy life on earth.

The dark-brown furrows drink Thy rain;
Soft grows the heart of hill and plain,
 Of every little glen;
Thy dewy mists distil their good,
Thy kindness crowns the year, and food
 Drops from Thy clouds on men.

Down falls the rain, the desert-well
Laughs to the brim, and they who dwell
 In thirsty lands rejoice :
On every side the woodland fills
With flowers, and the little hills,
 Enraptured, hear Thy voice.

The folds are warm with fleecy sheep,
And happy shepherds bid them sleep
 Within their wattled ring;
The valleys stand so thick with corn
That the pleased husbandman at morn
 Thinks that they laugh and sing.

O blest are those who give Thee praise,
Who see Thee thus in Nature's ways,
 And build their life on Thine;
Whose souls have every year their spring,
Whose summer-peace and autumn bring
 Their harvest to Thy shrine.

Parables of Nature

MEN ask, Where shall I find teaching that I care for; where a daily word spoken to my heart; where the short lessons which, teaching more than sermons, flit like swallows over the plains of the soul, and drop a seed to fructify hereafter in a harvest of perfect good? And the answer is, Open your eyes and look round about you. See the son returning penitent to his father's door, hesitating to enter. But listen for a moment, what do you hear? A cry of joy—"This, my son, was dead, and is alive again, was lost and is found." It is a revelation of God's fatherhood. Take up a common flower as you go over the meadows, the daisy, star of the grass. Look at the way in which the pink is dropped upon its leaves, touch by touch till you fail to see the gradations. Look how its yellow wands are set in the midst, each with its golden crown. What is that? It is that infinite care of God which Christ knew when he said, "If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall He clothe you, O ye of little faith." Watch the growth

of the corn, from seed to harvest. What do you see there? You see the growth of the soul. Jesus knew its story well, and taught his happiest spiritual lessons from all that he saw in the green fields round Gennesaret. Pass by an orchard in spring : you see a tree laden with foliage. Pass by the same orchard in autumn : you see the tree producing no fruit, but only leaves. What does the owner do? He waits a little. Year by year he digs about the tree, and takes care that it has plenty of refreshing nutriment; but if nothing comes of it he says, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" What have you seen? You have seen the way in which God deals with a soul whose life produces leaves but no fruit. Pass by on a Yorkshire moor or Highland mountain-side when eve is falling dark and menacing, and the snow comes up hidden in the bosom of the cloud; stay till you see the ninety-nine sheep penned in the rough fold beneath the shelter of the rock, and then, amid the blinding drift, go with the shepherd all night long from glen to glen, till at last he find the dying lamb, and, laying it on his shoulders, brings it back rejoicing. What have you seen? Only a shepherd and his sheep, and danger faced,

and joy born out of the depths of love and pity for one of lower by one of higher race? More, more than that. You have seen Christianity, seen the relation of the Great Shepherd to the race of men. The whole world is a parable of the dealings of God with man. The interpretation is plain to all who will open their eyes to see. All our religion, all that is necessary for us to believe may be found in our daily life with men, and can be learnt from the relation of men to animals.

This is simple teaching, utterly simple; a child can comprehend it, a wise man can love it with all his heart. There is no need to represent Christianity as a difficult thing to understand. In the minuter details of life, in the application of the principles of Jesus to diverse characters, difficulties arise. But one simple idea lies at the root of all Christ's teaching—the salvation of the lost, the bringing of rest to the weary and sorrowful and sinful of the world. Broadly and clearly Christ declared in the parables the identity of God's compassion with our compassion; the identity of God's eagerness to find the lost with our eagerness to find them.

The Beauty of the Christ Life

LIFE is a patient effort to build our character and work, through giving ourselves away for our brothers, into a perfect building. This was the life of Christ our Master : the pattern of the perfect life of love, which God had showed him as he walked in the inspirations of youth among the fields of Nazareth, the high and sacred thoughts which filled his soul as he went down from the lonely village into the great world. Self-forgetfulness was its foundation, and the saving of man its practical aim. So began the architecture of his life. Use and duty were the first with him. To live to organize his life for use ; to fit it for his purpose ; to make it fit to follow that purpose to its end ; to build it so wisely that men of all nations and climes might shelter under its spiritual principles ; that every type of character—women and men and children, wise and learned, rich and poor—might find in it rest and peace and redemption—such was his first and mighty labour. And then he made it beautiful. It was jewelled with lovely work of act and speech from end to end. The way he did things,

the words he fitted to the things done, seem, like all perfectly beautiful work, easy enough to say and do. But there was that behind the deeds which lifted them above all other work in beauty, which made them so beautiful that men cannot read of them, after centuries, without divine emotion. Visible it was! This was no retired hermit nursing a dainty affection for God and man in his study or his cave, but going in and out among men, among all classes, all his life a brother of humanity. Utility and ornament, practical power and beauty born of self-forgetfulness, and for the salvation, comfort, peace and joy of man—that was the plan on which the great cathedral of his life was built.

Our Inner Life

WE should build our inner life, as the great builders of the past built their halls and churches, with such care and with such spiritual materials, that it may be worthy to last for ever. We should feel that all we think and feel belong to one who cannot die, and will have their effect on a life which is to be harmonized for ever with the beauty

of the Lord our God. We should take care to mark by some isolated thought or prayer, by some little hour of recollective quiet, the moments in the life of the soul which were full of exalted sorrow that trembled into rejoicing, of love which reached unusual height, of pity that blossomed into loveliness, of joy which seemed divine, of revelation of truth that we knew to come from God—so that, in the great wide future, when we wander, led by memory, back within the landscape of the soul, we may find a little altar as it were, a fountain, a fenced glade, a cross, which, in a moment, will recall to us the earthly hour when we were happy in love, and send into us, even in the heavenly life, a rush of love and beauty. Live in the present life of your soul, with so much of the love of Christ in it, that you will make it beautiful with his human beauty. And make it loving and therefore beautiful in the present not for the present only, but with the glowing and rejoicing faith that all you do in love to-day will be beautiful for ever in the Paradise of God.

Dying to Live

IF any man was ever bound to go up to his Jerusalem and face his foes for the sake of truth, Jesus was bound. If ever, in the history of human progress, the courage, faith and fortitude of one man were bound to fulfil their perfect work for the sake of man, it was so now. If ever the future of the human race called on a man with the voice of all the ages to be true to his ideas, it called on Jesus then. Had he not then exposed himself to danger and to death, his doctrine of life had never gained the heart of the world. He would have fallen out of the company of the Prophets, a deserter from the standard of love to God and Man. I do not say it was needful that he should die, but it was needful for him to go and maintain his cause before the face of his foes; and if they said to him, "Death or surrender," it was needful that he should choose death. And death, as it always is when the soul is true to God, was life. . . . This, then, is also our duty, and similar circumstances are not uncommon. When such a crisis comes, be not unworthy of it. Do not let ease or love of quiet or hatred of rough contact with the world or

fear of danger, disease and death keep you back from going up to your Jerusalem, and meeting the consequences of the ideas you have supported while you had but little opposition, but which are now in this hour like trumpets in the ears of those that hate them. If there is war now against them, it proves that a crisis in their development has come. Shall you, who nourished them at your heart, slink away from their side when, full grown, they go forth to battle? Nay, that is the recreant's way. Put yourself at their head, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of such a faith in God and truth as you should possess in this your day. Stretch out the hand of your spirit, and you will find God's hand in yours; and mighty will be then the tide of vital power and courage which will fill your soul. Yes, in all lives of men and women, girls and boys, from the workman's home to the king's palace, these times arrive; and in them all, though the event may seem small, the principle is the same. Cling, then, to the truth you think right to maintain for man, proclaim it boldly and take the consequences. Leave Galilee and go up to Jerusalem. That was the way of Jesus; and in politics and

society, in Parliament and in the Town Council, in the movement of men towards a higher society, in all professions and business, if you stand true you stand with Christ, whether you call yourself by his name or not.

The Salt of Trial

THERE is no favoured child of Heaven who can always be in peace beneath the pleasant shades of life, in the valley of sweet waters. There comes a time when we must tread the furnace, and leave behind in it half of our life. We forget that we are soldiers, not of Capua, but of the Cross, but God does not forget. The fire of the Lord falls upon us, and in its scorching flame we find out what is false and what is true, what is pure and not pure, what is worthy and not worthy of Eternity. We stand, stripped of all that is transient, worldly and useless, before the face of God, reality forced on us at last. When God salts us with fire, there remains nothing but the few true thoughts that we have kept, the few true deeds we have done for man, the few unselfish feelings we have had, through love of the Christ within us.

We learn in fire what are the true aims, the true hopes, the true faith of life. We are taught what is worthy of the child of God to do, of one who is inheritor, not of the kingdoms of this earth but of the kingdoms of Heaven. What the fire is we each of us know. It is that trial, temptation or difficulty which breaks up our easy life, and forces us into realities. It is the work of God; and on our being able to see that depends the result of it. If we take it as the work of His love, which desires us to be perfect, then it purifies us; if we do not, it hardens us. But whether we believe it from God or not, it is still from Him. Yes; there in the midst of the fire, God meets us, sanctifies and ennobles life. We have found out that we cannot get rest in the seeking of our own will, and we are ready to listen to His voice.

To "preach Christ" truly

THE phrase—"to preach Christ"—has become only a phrase on the lips of many. Few words have a nobler meaning than these; few have been more degraded. To take the

living spirit and power out of a thing, to kill it, and having swathed it with the dry speculations and the rigid opinions of a system, to hold this mummy up to the worship of the world, is the work of the Apostles of religious cant. Preaching Christ has been too much altered into preaching a human system about him. To preach him truly, is to take his words and actions, and to show him as he is from them; to trace the import and the power of his work from Nazareth to Calvary; to present him to our love as the Son of Man, in whom our humanity is glorified and brought near to God; as one by whom our sufferings and trials were shared, so that he can sympathize with all the pain of earth, and lead us through trial to victory over evil; to preach him as the ideal of humanity in whom the whole race is now hidden, and who is, therefore, bound to bring the whole race into union with himself; to speak of him as the revealer of the true character of God, the discloser of the Fatherhood of God to the orphanhood of man. To preach Christ is to preach to men that wondrous love which was the spirit of his life and the motive of his death. It is to preach the moral power which subdued the will of

the world; the spiritual power which enkindled the heart of the world; the life, which moving like purest light among the storm and stress of men, reprov'd the evil and aroused the good; which, while it was passed within the world, was separated for ever from the spirit of the world. To preach this, and much more, till he becomes a living personage in history and a living spirit in our heart, is to preach Christ; and when such preaching flows straight from the heart, it is the highest work which human speech can do. It is the great blessedness of every minister of Christ to lose himself in testifying to his Master. The Minister of Christ is a Prophet and not a Priest. He proclaims the truth that God is always in the heart of man; he destroys by the power of that truth every barrier between the soul of man and the spirit of God; he ignores himself as a mediator and leaves each individual man alone with the Father of his life. He declares the Fatherhood of God, His salvation, His education of mankind, not as things to be attained by means of certain rites which he alone has authority to perform, but as facts for ever true for every soul, and which the free effort and resignation of the man himself

can alone realize as true. He declares that all times are equally holy, all places equally divine, if the spirit of God is in those who are living in the time or abiding in the place. The worship such a man teaches is the free, joyful outpouring of a man's own soul direct to the God who dwells in his heart. The spiritual life that he teaches is to be won not through ritual, but through the moral effort of the will; through personal prayer, through God-assisted resistance of temptation; through the certainty and feeling that God's presence and power, and love and truth are ever abiding within his heart.

Personal Love of Christ

THOUGH individual religious life may be lived and inspired without the love of Christ becoming ardent, there is one thing which will not have great power without its fervent feeling, and that is—religious work among men. Preaching, teaching, missions, conversion of the outcasts, redemption of the lost, building up and knitting together of religious communities, fail to secure a lasting success, unless they are driven and inspired

by a personal love for a Master who has realized in his life the perfection of our nature, whose love makes our heart glow with love, who is to us the image of that Divine love which abides and shines for ever. We need now to recover more and more of that personal devotion of the early Church for Jesus which was in the rush and fire of Pentecost. It is that which will kindle our preaching into power, clasp our associations together, convert the sinner, raise men from the dead, seek and save the lost, pour life into our missions and fill the churches of this land. We want in religion a man to love whom we may feel to be the revealer of the heart of God in humanity. If men do not take Jesus, they will take some one else. And I should like to know who can suit the human heart so well. Ah, when many say to me, "Turn aside hither, take this leader, follow this ideal," I will make no reply, but move in love and reverence to meet that quiet figure who stands on the worn highway of life, among the children he blesses and the outcasts and sinners he redeems; with infinite love in his unfathomable eyes, and say, "Lord, to whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Spirit before Doctrine

THERE can be no truly religious outward worship which does not flow from an inward spiritual life. This is the root principle of God's education of man as revealed by Christ. Almost all other religions, and many forms also of Christianity have tried the opposite, tried to produce spiritual life in a man by the imposition on him from without of forms, and they have broken down. Christ went home to the point. Change the heart, he said, the life will change. Give true inward life and it will always create its own form, and the form, being the natural and spontaneous growth of love or purity in the heart, must be right. Above all, it will be true. Hence all outward religious observances that any one of us accepts ought to be the spontaneous expression of his inner feeling. All forced expressions, all forms imposed from without that have no answer within are dangerous to truthfulness and break down, leaving the man worse than before. No man putteth a piece of new cloth upon an old garment, for then the new maketh a rent, and the rent is worse than

before. But we reverse Christ's rule. Again and again men try to produce spiritual life in themselves and others by compulsion from without. The failure is so complete that a real religious life seems further off than before the experiment. No! that will not do. There must be life before there is useful or lasting form. Religious observances of every kind must be the natural expression of the heart, or else, being untrue, they produce habitual hypocrisy. We cannot transgress God's rule of education. The life of the spirit must precede and produce naturally the varying forms of religious feeling.

Sunday Preaching

THE world in which we live is a sorely tormented world, full of woeful sins and their desolate results; torn with sorrows, terrible with inward and silent battles. The men and women who sit below the minister, the minister himself—if we could but look within upon the world of their hearts or on the labour of their spirit—are, for the most part, tossed in storms, crying for light and peace, fighting

desperately against wrong, stretching forth their hands to God, or vainly longing for a sight of Him. And when on one day in the week we come, freed from the outward, to hear our brother's voice speak to the inner life, we want to listen to something which touches our own trouble and the vast trouble of the world. We desire to hear how we can justly forget our sins, and get rid of them; how God can help us; how we can conquer our sorrows and get their good; how we can love and how we are loved; and how the inevitable and terrible pain of our brothers can be relieved. We need to be told of joy and sympathy and comfort, of the powers of love with us in the fierce warfare which we cannot escape. This is the voiceless cry which goes up Sunday after Sunday from congregated human hearts all over the world. These are the things we want—rest and love, simplicity and peace; no controversy; things for the soul that need no debate, things that endure.

What have we to say to it?

The Truths of Christianity

CHRIST proclaimed three great ideas to the personal soul; and in them, for our individual lives, all Christianity is contained. The first secures Love, with its universal power. The second secures Conduct, the doing of righteousness, with its universal use. The third secures Life, with its universal joy, and the life will finally be at one with Love and Righteousness. The three truths mingle, like the three primary colours, into absolute light. Of course, we can weave out of them by intellectual analysis all kinds of doctrines, forms and ceremonies; but these rise and pass away, and they have no weight except for a time. They are unnecessary in the eternal world of God; not one of them touches our salvation, that is, our union with God; they are human, not divine; of the Church and the Sect, not of Christ. Of course, we can make out of them all the motives and means for the infinite variety of spiritual emotion in the various souls of men; in their art and literature and life; but these are but the playing of the waves in our souls at the bidding of the winds of circumstance.

They ruffle the surface of the ocean. The deep unfathomable ocean itself is the three great Christian conceptions, the three great Christian truths—the Fatherhood of God, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Immortality of the Soul. These are Christianity, and all the rest is either transient, or unnecessary. These are the three that abide; these are the most excellent thoughts on which a man can anchor his ship of life. These, as the world passes away and the desire thereof, endure and shine like the eyes of God Himself.

Infinite Variety in Christianity

CHRISTIANITY has, generation after generation, with all the prolific power which belongs to a vital root, taken new shapes in the minds of men. The main forms it has taken during the last sixty years are now exhausted of the good they contained. What harvest they had—and it was a very fair harvest—has been gathered in for the use of men, and the field is now in stubble; nay, rather, it has been ploughed and sown, and we wait for the new earing. The nonsense that is talked about Christianity being dead arises from

those who mistake the decay of old intellectual forms of it for the death of the living thing itself. We are at the point of one of those cycles of life in which the eagle is dying, but from the egg it leaves behind a new eagle will be born. As to those who say, "Kill Christianity," you may as well try to kill Science as Christianity. A living spirit which lives by love in man can no more perish than love itself can perish. All decay in it only produces fresher life. We stand upon the verge of this new life, and the main thing we have to do is to be alert and ready, accinct for the race, looking out for the call of God, and for the fresher light of His countenance; as quick to follow a true leader as we should be to lead, if such a duty were laid upon us; caring nothing for our own repute, but only for the victory of right and love and truth; and rejoicing if we are counted worthy of fighting the good fight of faith. A new world is opening—its dawn is already in the sky; the leaves are beginning to shoot upon the trees of this fresh springtide. For all who are alive and keen, it ought to be a time of joy and impulse.

The Christ within us

THE vision of God in Christ must become a reality within; must be woven into the fibres of the will, into the thought, the passion of the soul, and be shaped into the acts of a life, lived in love, in and out. Doing is the means of seeing. He sees truth who does truth; he only knows love who rules his daily deeds by love; he only comprehends justice and mercy who is just and merciful day by day; he only sees God who is working out in life the character of God. There is no mystery in the matter, nor any subterfuge possible. It does not depend on doctrine or ritual, on this or that obedience to the laws of a Church or sect. There is nothing in the whole world which will enable us to see God, but to be like God in character, to live in love as Jesus lived in love. A Christ without us will not do; we must have his spirit in us; think his thoughts, act by his motives, do his works, base our life on his principles, share in his aspirations, take up his cross, and be ready to die for love, as he was ready. It is difficult, how difficult Christ knew. "Strive," he said, "to enter in at the strait gate."

But by the striving strength is gained, and if the weaving be long, the web is enduring. And we are not left alone. The Spirit of God is with us, even though we do not feel His presence; and the tenderness of Christ is never far away. He lives in our struggle, and if we do not faint in pursuing, we shall soon be aware of his power in our soul. Every day we fight on, that hope to see God as He is will grow nearer, some evil impulse will be weakened, some wrong passion be less tyrannical, some ideal become brighter, some goodness easier, some tenderness be added to love, some step forward be made in that transformation by which we, weak, simple, wearied, and failing, are being changed into the image of God, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. This is Christ within us, the hope of glory, and the glory is the vision of God. This is to possess that hope within us as a power, not without us as a picture.

Hymn

O GOD, what sacrifice can I
Bring to the glory of Thy throne?
Thine is the earth, and boundless sky;
What have I which is not Thine own?
 Nought but my will, myself, my whole,
 My body, spirit, and my soul !

These Thou hast deigned to ask of me,
And yet they are Thy gifts, and I
Am bound to render them to Thee—
Therefore in power and love be nigh,
 That I, with no reluctant brow,
 May bring them to Thy footstool now.

Put Thou my body to the school,
A living sacrifice to Thee;
All the five gates of feeling rule,
In self-control my freedom be,
 Till every sense, and all desires
 Be purged by Thy refining fires.

Thine, too, the images, the thought,
Building, unbuilding in my soul;
The love that earth to heaven brought,
The hopes of youth, the dreams that stole
 Through manhood's work, and seemed to
 bring
 Out of the deep some treasured thing.

Fill me with righteousness and truth,
With joy and peace, and gentle mood,
Courage and hope's immortal youth,
Long-suffering and fortitude,

Meekness and temperance and awe,
And most, with loving of Thy law.

And O, when I am most alone,
Deep in my inner nature be !
Clothe with perfection like Thine own
My spirit, let me put on Thee !

Then lift me, Lord, to Heaven, and move
My life through worlds and worlds of love.

The Romance of the Spirit

Do not let the spirit of youth pass wholly away ! In the midst of the great city's press of men, remember still the day when you loved the beauty of the woods and hills ; and let the memory be dear, so dear that you cannot be content to live without renewing joys so pure. Lose some money, give some time, that you may refresh your eyes and restore your heart with the loveliness of nature which is given without price, but which will not give itself to a soul which thinks only of things that are given with

price. Nor yet wholly surrender romance. Romance lies in the power of passionately feeling all things that belong to love, and it pertains as deeply, but in a different way, to the heart of the old man, as it does to youth, and as it ought to do to manhood. Keep your soul alive to it in the midst of business. If intensity of work chill or decay that power in you, be sure that you are losing that which you will miss most bitterly when old age steals upon you; and be still more sure then, that work and the worldliness it often brings with it are doing you grievous wrong. Better lose some prosperity, better give up some of your money and position than grow insensitive to kindly feeling, dull of heart, chill and half-dead within. Be not slothful in business, but keep romance of heart. Let youth run on into manhood. To live by these things alone in manhood would be folly. To carry youth only into manhood is never to be a man; but to take nothing of your ardent youth with you is, in losing the continuity of personality, and in losing all inspiration, never to become a complete man.

The Coming of the Bridegroom

THERE are those whose life of the soul is set for years in a grey monotony of thought and feeling—sunless days within, shrouded in apathy; weary duties done with joyless hearts; reiterated troubles that, like the crowds in a great city's thoroughfares, tread down the gardens of the soul into grassless rock. In that sad way many live, and pitiful it is—more pitiful than other lives that seem more bitter and more cruel. The cause of this drear weather in the hidden life lies sometimes outside its sufferer in besieging circumstances, but more often in the slothful, sullen or selfish temper of the soul. For, indeed, if we are justly impatient with ourselves, if we desire to awake and rejoice, and believe that God meant us to have joy within—that this is our right and that we mean to have it—the hour comes when we have our chance, when the Bridegroom comes down the street, and the holiday of the soul arrives with music, love and light. I have seen a hundred times this resurrection from the grave. A new piece of work is suddenly given to a man, fitted

for his nature, and bringing with it eagerness; a change of place or duty opens joy to a young girl's heart; an unsuspected love comes to us, like the spring on wintry woods; a book reveals to our morose heart that we are not alone; even a desperate trial, which upturns the foundations of the soul—all make a new world, a new life within us, so that, aroused and kindled by the revelation, we can never feel apathy again. These wonders of change are the rescuers of life, holidays of being, which, whether they be stormy or still, make a new heaven and a new earth for men. Be ready for them when they come, else, when they come, you may miss their light and life.

The Longing for Love

It is said that men and women who have a great work to do should do it for duty's sake alone. It is true we ought to be able, if such a burden should be laid upon us, to do our work unsupported by human love. We ought to be able to be alone with the Father of our spirit, and fulfil our task alone. We always have Him to love us in our

solitudes. But to say that we should not wish for the support of human love, that duty should always be enough for us, is to make a demand which violates our human nature, which is Stoic, not Christian. Do not be led away by the apparent nobility of this ascetic demand. Be able to live without human love, content with the divine, but keep, as Jesus kept, the desire for love, for sympathy. That is the natural thing, the true humanity, the common heart in the matter. There are times when to receive love or praise is worth a world to a lonely man or woman, struggling for a great cause; when a human voice speaking tenderly, or one act of impassioned sympathy will lift the burden of overwhelming loneliness off the heart, will heal and comfort one who is stretched upon a rack of thought. It may be our lot in our home, or among our friends, to light on such an hour, to have the chance of giving sympathy to one who is left alone, who needs one word of comprehension, or one silent act of loving-kindness to lift from him the trouble of his loneliness. Be ready to seize the hour; have the heart to see the heart of your friend, your child, your brother man; and let them feel you understand.

The Secret of Ourselves

WE look into our soul and are dimly conscious of large tracts therein of which as yet we have no cognizance—tracts of intelligence or passion over which we have never moved; feelings, thoughts, lives of which we dimly understand we are capable, but which we have never touched; waste lands, untilled, unknown, which we have never explored, but which a new love, a new book, a new duty, a new event may whirl us into in a moment, and create for us therein another life, with a new earth and a new heaven. Life is full of such strange revelations. If what we are seems often unknown, what we may be seems even more unknown. All we know is that we are more than we know, that in our soul are infinite capacities, an endless series of lives, boundless possibilities of evil and of good. Then we are told that this measureless secret of ourselves, whose phases differ in every man, is a purposeless problem, necessarily flung together by the dance of atoms, and to be resolved into that dance again. In every man and woman born into this world, this

game in which we suffer so bitterly, by which we are so profoundly excited, out of which so much that is dear to man has been evolved—has been played by the atomic clash, and we and all our puzzles are only a part of that. It has seemed so real to us, so terrible, so beautiful, so true—and yet it has, in the end, no more meaning for us than the steam which comes from a kettle! Well, of all the unintelligent theories ever invented by the understanding, that is the most devoid of intelligence, the most unthinkable when our reason is in good order. And of all the wonderful forms of credulity that is the most credulous. It is not only want of feeling, of imagination, of spiritual conscience which declares that death closes the book of our secret, it is want of intellectual power and insight. Even the understanding has to submit its eyes to be bandaged by its own pride before that conclusion be accepted. No, the single yet multitudinous being which we are is not destined to that fate. As we grow older, unless we have had no seriousness, we know more and more of our own secret—what we are, what our powers mean, what the puzzles of our being suggest, the kindlings in us of a light and life which shall be here-

after but cannot be here, bright shoots of everlastingness—these are more and more revealed. There is a progress. Behind the darkneses of life we dimly see a glory grow. We do not love less but more, yet we are not made despairing by trouble. We know by the experience of our soul that if we fight on we shall win the day—that is, we learn to know ourselves in God's love, and to find out ourselves in going out of ourselves to help our fellows. To forget self is to be intensely conscious of personality. We are convinced of an education within us, a development, a future before us. That has begun which must fulfil itself; and in that thought all notion of death being the conclusion disappears like a cloud in the sun. The secret of the soul is in the hands of eternity.

The High Labours of Eternity

WE feel within us vast capabilities of work. Too often we have no room to employ them, no opportunity. I can say to all who are striving towards God, that it will be different in the world to come. They shall have their place, and with the place their work. Both are being prepared for them, and I doubt not

that the patience, resignation, self-repression, long-suffering which want of work has engendered here in God's children are in themselves elements which they will need hereafter for the noble work which God will give them. Nay, the very repression of their energies will have the effect of concentrating them more, of redoubling their original power, so that when the high labours of Eternity are offered to their acceptance, they will let loose their energies upon them with all the joy and vigour of ships which, long held in harbour, now hear the wind coming freshly from the land, and spread their sails for joyous voyaging over unknown seas. It is then the honour and dignity of each of us to chime in with the toil of God for us; to prepare ourselves for the place prepared. We have a work to do on earth, but it is nothing to the work we have to do in heaven. Life takes a new and nobler aspect in the light of that high belief. To know our work, to do it, and to look forward to performing it for ever beneath the Leadership of God our Father—that is the thought which gives impulse and freedom to exertion, which makes this apathetic life of ours a constant and exultant march to victory.

The Pursuit of the Perfect

APPROVE perfect things, nay, rather, fall in love with them, and live and work for them as you do for one you passionately love. Indeed, these mighty conceptions, held in God's character, are living creatures whose voice you may hear, whose hands you may take in yours, whose affection and impulse may be yours. And He in whom they endure, who "spreads undivided, operates unspent," can become personal to you and abide with you, as friend with friend, as father with child, in a nearer relation than any relation on earth—His being interwoven with yours as woof with warp. It is said that it is inhuman to care for these ideas and faiths, and that they do not help the trouble of men. It is enough to say that they are most clearly revealed to those who care most for humanity, and that the most human are those who have felt them most deeply and preached them most fervently. The great prophets, poets, artists, the men who have most moved the world, are those who have never relinquished the ideal, who lived discontent and died unsatisfied. It is only

when men love that which is perfect, and are hungering after a coming good and believing in it—that their own trouble is lessened, that they can bear the heavy weight of life, that their affliction is illuminated with a light which makes them rejoice when they are most cast down and which enables them never to despair of men. Strip away these illimitable facts, dissolve these ideals which impassionate, and you will ruin the human race and banish progress. Cling to that which is most excellent, to the struggle of Christ for the perfect and to faith in its endless pursuit.

The Air of the Infinite

THIS world in which we live, this limited world of time and space, this present in which we clash incessantly with transient and dying things, with interests of a day—this is only our momentary home. We are to do our duty in it, to share in its higher life, to love our comrades in its fleeting scene—but our true resting-place is not in the passing and the finite. We are sailing over the infinite, which for the moment seems

the finite, to a further infinite, on which, in a doubling and redoubling life, we shall sail for ever. Think of this—and act in it. Let it lie at the root of your life, support your thought, kindle your love, enliven your action and rejoice your imagination. Nor will this diminish your work in the present world. The greater interests of humanity, the finer issues of the life of men, the noble causes, the ideas that are the Kings and Captains of progress, the things worthy to be done, the ideals which belong to beauty, knowledge and the spirit, high thinking and deep feeling, the government of men for good and happiness—all that produces and supports the enduring work of the human race—these are not lost in the air of the Infinite. On the contrary, when they breathe that air, their power and thought are doubled. They belong even more to the infinite world to come than they belong to the finite world in which we labour. All of them which we put into form continue in this world when we are dead. And we continue them, with unabated interest, when we pass into the other world. They come from God to us; they go with us to God. All that we think and labour for on earth is dignified, glorified,

and kindled into impassioned work. Man is magnified in the infinite of God; himself is infinite.

The Conflict between Good and Evil

THE history of man is the history of a battle between good and evil—between the enmity of the serpent and the resistance of the man. The seed of the woman is mankind; the essence of our life here is to bring the future to perfection through contest against the serpent. The beginning of the great drama of humanity is represented in the poem in the opening chapters of Genesis. The great idea of this drama is the education of the race through contest against evil, a contest which will only end when all the race are perfect. It is carried on not only on earth but also in Heaven: for those who pass away from the stage here take up other portions of it in another world and on a nobler stage. At times, the scene is so grand, and humanity appears so great therein, that we seem to recognize the ideas of omnipotent Love and Righteousness moving within it. Again, it is so awful, and humanity appears

so unutterably base, and oftentimes so rent and torn therein, that it is no wonder we sometimes mistake our God for the implacable tyrant who has made us for His sport, and hates the things He has made. But, on the whole, men in their highest hours have dimly seen and registered their belief that justice and love direct the play of human action and of human passion to a majestic end. Foot to foot, for thousands of years—ever becoming full of a deeper passion of interest in the battle—the battle of evil with the seed of the woman has been waged; and we, blinded often by the pain of our wounds, complain of God. He is almighty; He has created us; but does His might make His right to expose us to this battle and its pain? No: God's right makes His might; and it is only when we shirk the contest, or give ourselves up captive to evil, and after the transient pleasure taste the agony of degradation, that we cry out against the unfairness of God. No man who is contending against wrong, who is fighting the battle firmly and strongly, complains of God. When we are struggling manfully, we feel the stern joy of the contest; we do not utter then this base complaint. We are conscious, when we

are in the press and action of self-sacrifice, of our immortality. And when we think of our immortality in God, and that we are destined to advance into a never-ending progress of perfection, we care but little for the hardness of the battle, or the agony of the strife. And fighting on, we find that as the battle grows stronger, the nobler we grow; and as we increase in nobleness, the more clearly do we see that God is right, and that in no other way than through the battle of undying enmity against evil can we be made true here and perfect hereafter. What should we be if we had no contest to win and to endure? There is no devil in the world half so bad as the devil of sloth, and God will not shrink from placing us in the very forefront of the battle, where wounds are most plentiful, rather than let us fall into the crawling and dust-eating life of one who is content with his own degradation. That was a comfortable life for the serpent, with no trouble in it whatever; but we are not called to comfort, but to contest. We are called upon by God to be untiring enemies of evil, and the call should act on all that is noble in our nature, as a trumpet on a war horse. This warrior spirit against evil is not half enough

alive among us. I do not say that it is dead, on the contrary, it is aflame among us; but there is also among us a detestable indifferentism, a fashionable lazy want of care, which is thought good breeding by some, but is in reality the worst breeding in the world, for it means deterioration of manhood, loss of enthusiasm and noble passion, above all, want of life. Would to God that we could do our work, and fight out our transmitted enmity to evil with the diligence of men who have no time for sitting idle in the tent door. God has given us a great work to do. It is to do all we can to crush evil whenever we meet it, in political, social or domestic life. We have but a few short years here in which to do our part. Let every day record a step won against our foe. He is a slave and without true manhood who does not take up the battle first declared in the words, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." He is the warrior of liberty and the brother of the truest man, who, having put on the whole armour of God, stands firm in the evil day, and looking back to Christ in whom his Humanity was victorious, contends against the seed of the serpent; and at every blow, inspired by the strength of God, feels

love for his Master deepening within, faith growing into certainty, and hope orbiting itself into a more perfect star in the heaven of his destiny.

Hymn

IMMORTAL Love, within whose righteous will
Is always peace;
O pity me, storm tossed on waves of ill;
Let passion cease;
Come down in power within my heart to reign,
For I am weak, and struggle has been vain.
The days are gone, when far and wide my will
Drove me astray;
And now I fain would climb the arduous hill,
That narrow way,
Which leads through mists and rocks to
Thine abode;
Toiling for man, and Thee, Almighty God.
Whate'er of pain Thy loving hand allot
I gladly bear;
Only, O Lord, let peace be not forgot,
Nor yet Thy care,
Freedom from storms, and wild desires
within,
Peace from the fierce oppression of my sin.

So may I, far away, when evening falls
 On life and love,
Arrive at last the holy, happy halls
 With Thee above;
Wounded yet healed, sin-laden yet forgiven,
And sure that goodness is my only heaven.

The Wintertide of Life

CLOSE on the heels of harvest comes decay. When the year has given up its fruits, it hastens on to winter. It dies in crimson and golden glory, but it dies. Its sunset is in splendour, but when the full redness is on the leaf, the tireless winds, the gnawing frost do their fierce work, and winter is upon us—winter, the prophet of old age, the John the Baptist of the year. When first we realize that all is over—the rapture of youth, the fulfilment and peace of early manhood, the harvest of our later years, that now death is at hand—“Vanity of vanities” is our cry. It is not a Christian’s cry. He remembers, in the weakness of the body, this saying of St Paul’s, “Our life is hidden with Christ in God.” When the leaves of his life are

falling fast, he sees the strength and glory of his soul in God. What God keeps for him he keeps himself for, and lives, while he decays and dies on earth, in the life to come. Then he can rise above the evil of the wintertide of life, and if he overtop its evil he can surely create its good. Yes, the unconquerable courage of the heart of man, the courage which has its source in our waiting life in God, lifts us above the failure of the body into the victory of the spirit over the body. Our outward man decays, "but our inward man is renewed day by day." There is no more triumphant utterance in all the world, nor one more true. The moral will, the loving heart, the spiritual powers of faith, joy and lofty expectation—these, when the old age is true and loving, are not weaker but stronger in the winter of life.

Old Age

As old age comes on, it is half dreaded, for it seems the removing of power. When desire dies, we think that the fire of life dies

with it. But the fire of life is in the power of loving, and love is the one thing which deepens and decays not in old age. We love our Father better than before. We seem to sit hand in hand with Him in our long silences of thought. When the noise of earth is hushed and its temptations dead and its cares turned into dreams, we know, as we never knew before, the meaning of "God with us," of that unbroken communion of love which the Father has with His child. Nor do we love mankind less, but more. Men and women seem better, worthier than they seemed to our youth. Some way or other all that irritated us departs from our vision. We cease to denounce, cease to argue, cease to dwell on injuries. We get below the stormy surface to the deep, primæval, divine things in human nature, and recognizing their kinship with God, are filled with tenderness. In the very face of death we have the most eager conviction of life. So falls on the old, while they are still here, the radiance of the spiritual world. In the depths of their soul, while they are yet on earth, are the psalms and hymns of the heavenly host, the melody of the life of God. Deep within they have, though their out-

ward man decay, the joyousness of youth and the strength of manhood. Indeed, neither youth nor manhood has more excited imaginations, more of the noble powers of life, more of the fire of love, than the old have now, when, like the Sea-King of the North, they are laid at last in the bosom of the ship of death, with the golden flag of victory flying above their head, and sent forth alone into the sea of eternity to meet their Father and to live with Him for ever.

Death: the Fulfilment of Life

DEATH, the world thinks, is the close of all. Nay, it is the beginning of power, the flowering of love, the emancipation of life. . . . That is the way we should look upon our dead, even when we sorrow most for them. It is the way we should ourselves look back when we come to die. There is always at first natural regret that we cannot go on, or that our loved ones cannot enter into the end of their labours. But then, when we think, we often know, at least when the work done

has been noble, that death is the best. To go on till we are worn out, to begin a new labour for which we are unfitted by the past and by age, is nothing to be desired. To die when our memory will be unspoilt is better. There is another cry which may be answered within the same realm of thought. It is the cry of "waste." When men die in the fulness of their powers, we think that there is a waste of power. So there might be, if the power of those who die were really extinguished. But that is not our belief. Our belief is that it is expanded, ennobled, set at once to work, that it can do its work better, that its energies are more developed, that the range and objects of its work are tenfold greater and more numerous than they are on earth. Waste ! when God and His work are everywhere. Waste ! when the whole universe of humanity in the other world is open to him whom we have lost on earth. Moreover, it is not fitting for a man to gaze upon his dead and say that there is waste of a noble life because it is cut short by death. A man who has worked well, who has loved, who has been brave and true, lives on in power, and brings forth fruit in men. Lost as earthly friends, the dead are

gained as spiritual indwellers and they even move us forward more powerfully to noble ends than when they were alive. Our wave of love, of brave battle, of sacrifice for truth, of tenderness, sends its ripple over all the ocean of humanity. There is nothing lost of our life. We lay our hands on men from generation to generation and bless them. The echoes of earth die, but "our echoes roll from soul to soul, and grow for ever and ever."

Hymn

As the weary-hearted pilgrim, on the ship
that leaves the shore,
Hears the bells of his sea-city say "Farewell
for evermore,"
So from many a pleasant city built within the
summer-heart
We are forced by grief or duty in our winter
to depart.

Nevermore to feel the passions that were
once so young and true,
Nor to hear again the voices, sweet as light
and soft as dew—

Then be with us, tender Father, silent
Comforter and Friend,
In this secret, speechless journey, guide us
to a peaceful end.

When sad Death, the lonely Sailor, calls us
to embark with him,
When across the bulwark leaning all the
lights of earth grow dim,
When we scarcely hear the weeping of the
loved we leave behind,
When out of the silent ocean blows the
unexperienced wind,

When the earth is still a trouble, and the
heaven half a dream,
In this sailing through the shadow, ere the
radiant glories gleam—
O be near us, loving Father, calm our
ignorant alarms,
Underneath our sighing spirit be Thy
everlasting arms.

Immortality

THERE is no such thing as death for man because God lives. That was St Paul's position. It was founded, not only on the vague visions and suggestions of the old religions, but on a truth proclaimed by Jesus Christ. What was the truth which, declared by Christ, put immortality on a new ground? It was the truth of the indestructible union of God and man. How was that truth proclaimed? By a man, the essential man. Christ was man, not God, and the whole force, comfort, and certainty of what he said is lost if he said it as God. He spoke as the Son of Man, as concentrating into himself the idea of the whole race. He spoke in the name of all mankind. And this is the way in which (Man and for men) he spoke. He said he dwelt in God and God in him. He said he was at one with God; that he thought the thoughts of God, spoke the words, and worked the works of God. He declared that man was undyingly united to God. What he was, we are. That was his doctrine.

We are inseparably related to the eternal; belong to Him and He to us. Man is a part of God, as the flowers are part of the sunshine, as the vapours which leave the ocean are part of the ocean and must return to it again, though their journeys are far, and they are distilled into a myriad dewdrops on a thousand hills. So, far as we wander, and infinite as our division, we come at last back to our Father's breast. It was this doctrine of the inseparable union of God and man which Christ sank so deep into the human heart that it can never be driven out of it again, and it is on the strong foundation of this doctrine that is built the Christian faith in immortality. Those who are essentially in God cannot die, unless God Himself first die. Those who have come out of God, and are His children must return to Him, however far they wander. They must share in His eternal life. Of all absurdities which can be fallen into, no absurdity can be so great as that which—God being supposed—imagines that there can be such a thing as a cessation of personal life. “God is not the God of the dead,” said Christ, “but of the living,” and he thought that sufficient answer. . . . Our work

is but the beginning of our eternal work, our work is really done in eternity, not in time, within the mighty realm of a Humanity which includes all past men as living, acting and thinking. Every touch of our work vibrates from end to end of this ocean of living souls, and influences not only our narrow corner but the whole. Nor is a shred of our work vain, empty of results in us as persons. No seed of it but bears fruit in our eternal continuance, there is nothing empty, resultless in our life, *all* looks forward. If we cannot finish a work we lay it by, knowing that we shall take it up again; if we cannot do what we see needed and know it is useless for us to try, we do not despair or wail, we know the time will come when it will be done. If we cannot reach our ideals, we do not chafe too much, we can wait, till at last in this constant living in the glorious future, through and by the present, a light comes in our life, and thought, and action, a light as of some other and diviner world. It is the light of the eternal world, the light by which we shall be always steadfast against sin, always unmovable in love, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as

we shall know in ever-increasing perfection of knowledge, that not one shred of all the work that we do throughout eternity will ever be in vain.

Communion with the Dead

THE true communion with the dead, who are alive in God, has nothing to do with the senses that deceive; with time that fleets away; with the earth which perishes. It is invisible, immortal, imperishable, spiritual. The sacred dead, and Jesus above all, are to be felt, not seen; loved in the spirit, not in the sense; known, as no earthly relationship can make them known, in the uttermost depths of consciousness; interwoven with every fibre of our life by their incessant spiritual pressure upon us. There can be a vital communion between us on earth and those whom we loved, but whom death has transferred to the life beyond this earth. Spirit can touch spirit, heart can live with heart, across the gulfs of space and time. In the infinite, impalpable ether of love, thought meets thought, feeling feeling, in

unrestrained communion. Life weds itself to life, and the barrier death seems to have made is a shadow that has passed away. We cannot always realize such communion, nor would it be wise that we should. The things of this world wrap us closely round, and we must take our share in them. . . . But if we do not allow ourselves to be absorbed in self and the transient things of earth, if we keep apart from these matters a spiritual and imaginative life within, a sacred country of the soul, where the skies are clear and full of stars, and the angel voices are heard when the spirit is attentive, there will be times when the soul will feel the impact of those we loved on earth come to us. They will involve their being with ours, and we shall know and rejoice. And in the strength of that revelation we shall live in a great peace for many days.

The Rest Hereafter

THE dead rest in the Lord from pain and sorrow, but not from labour. The Rest hereafter is the highest rest man has on earth—the rest which comes when we create

with joy, when we discover truth, when we have accomplished some deed of love. We touch on earth that rest at moments when we shape easily that which we have conceived with joy. It is the rest of easy, rejoicing creation. And a noble thing it is to believe that our beloved dead are thus working in the love of God and rejoicing in their work, able to fulfil all they desired to fulfil on earth and could not; able to make and build all they divinely shape in thought, all they passionately long to create. In that they find immortal rest. It is plain that this is the true meaning of "they rest from their labours," that is, from the pains which attend the work on earth, for the writer says that they are blessed—for "their works do follow them." . . . "Their works follow them"; and their personality, the result of their work. That is a great comfort for those who remain behind them. They do not change, except into greater love, beauty and goodness; and we shall know them when we meet. Their thought, their personal way of thinking, endeared to us for so long; the little touches of manner, the outcome of their personal loving, by which we knew what they felt; the special

peculiar sweetness and grace, which were theirs and no one else's in the world; their original way of looking at the world and life, their unimitated ways; their separate personality by which they made us for ever love them, which in its difference isolated them from us, but made us know God and man better—these, the work of their whole life upon themselves, follow them to the spiritual world.

Christmas Day

WAKE and awake, hear what the Shepherds tell
Of joyful tidings which this night befell;
Dwelling in field they watched their fleecy
 sheep,
When all the dreaming world was fast asleep;
And still and cloudy was the sky, so still,
They heard their cattle crop the darksome
 hill.

Sad was their heart ! And poor, forgotten
they !

“ And no man thinketh on us ”—thus they
say—

When lo, the Heavens oped, and in the gate
A mighty Angel stood, with joy elate ;

Around him shone the glory of the Lord ;
Deep dread the Shepherds had with one
accord.

“ Fear not,” the rainbow Creature sang in
view ;

“ Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you,
Which shall rejoice all folk upon the earth !
This day, in David’s city, comes to birth
For you, a Saviour, which is Christ the
Lord :

And lo, a sign I give you of my word—

“ Wrapped in his swaddling clothes, and
there reclined

Within a manger, ye the Babe shall find ! ”—
He spake, and suddenly a seraph throng
Flew round about him, singing this fair
song—

“ Peace to the earth, goodwill to men be
given ;

Glory to God, in highest heights of
Heaven ! ”

Then did these poor and foolish pastors run
To find the Mother and her little Son :
Sweet was the scene, and Love was all its
power,
And happy were the Shepherds in that hour !
Dear Love was born, and now their
common days
With light were always lovely and with
lays.

So sang Christ's people in the days of old,
Poor shepherds in the night, with scanty fold,
Feeding their little flock on heathen hills,
Watching and lonely, girt with many ills ;
But always hearing the angelic cry—
“ Love, joy and peace are man's and
cannot die.”

Blest then the poor, the sick, the lost, the
slave,
All whom the world forgot, nor cared to
save ;
Restless and sinful, sad and broken came,
And found forgiveness, peace, and loss of
shame,
They heard the voice of Jesus, true and
mild,—
“ Wouldst thou be perfect, be a little
child.”

Ring then the Christmas bells with clash and
clang !

Ring forth the glad news that the Angels
sang ;

Over the graves, the pain, the grief of men
Ring forth the story of Christ's birth again !

And may dear Love, the Child in poor
array,

Be born in us this happy Christmas Day.

The Lord's Supper

THINK of the Supper of the Lord as a memorial of the Master's love even to death, until, filled with memorial thoughts of him, you are rapt away beyond them into vital union of thought and feeling with him ; and in that realized union strength comes to you to live a worthier life. Think that in it you witness to the fact that you are bound to be crucified with Christ, to show forth the power of his death in yourself, and for all mankind. Think that in it you foresee the time when all men shall be redeemed, and the labour of sacrifice close in the joy of sacrifice. Think that in it you link yourself

in the great representative of the race to all the communion of saints, and claim all men, poor and rich, wise and ignorant, civilized and savage, as your brothers. Think that you declare in it for yourself and for all mankind that man's only peace and power is in vital communion with God. Think that in that quiet meal you share in the symbol which tells you that its meaning is to outreach itself—that in it you declare the divineness through love of all human acts; that no life is too lowly or no work too mean for the spirit of Christ to fill, and the devotion of a human heart to render a sacrifice to the Lord of love. Think that in it you praise God for all men as by right forgiven, and sanctified by God the Father. Gather up into one great conception all these thoughts, and soon its profoundest meaning will reveal itself to you, the meaning of Communion—your life the life of man; the life of man your life; your life the life of God; the life of God your life.

The Close of the Year

IT is thus in life : call after call to leave exhausted things and to go on to perfection ; death after death following resurrection after resurrection ; incessant decay of the scaffolding of life, but within the building of a character—the dead burying their own dead, but our soul developing through each death into higher life. It is curious, if we are doomed to pass into nothingness, that there is so much development—that we are so hurried forward with aspiration, so pricked and goaded into effort, so never let alone. But so it is, and we have a reason for the trials of life that the death-preachers cannot give. It is that we are going on into a more perfect life, being fitted for it year by year. At last, after all these inward deaths of the past and resurrections in the present, the death of the body draws near. As we lie there waiting for the change, we look back on the past, on the trouble and effort, on all the battles which seemed so terrible. It is as if they had not been, so far as the pain of them is concerned. Love and joy and the noble things of the spirit—these in

our departing spirit are more alive than ever. Again and again we have had our Calvary, crucified with Christ; again and again our Easter Days, risen with Christ into a new life. Again and again our old year has died in pain; again and again the New Year has given us a fresh impulse, another love, another work, another hope. Each has lifted us forward in inward progress. The soul is now accustomed to Resurrection. Life indeed, not death, is its native element. Death changes its aspect. It wears the features of a joyful and happy child. And when we slip into its embrace, we hear the voice of Christ: "I am arisen; rise with me into the perfect life with God, my Father and your Father. Come and follow me, as on earth, so now in Heaven.

"The old year is dead, the new has dawned."

Across the wintry hills and towards the
sea,
The Old Year, with his ghosts, has sought
his grave;
Alone he stands where past Eternity
Rolls on the beach its far unfathomed
wave.

Silent, he passes down the silent shore,
Enters the darkness, crying "Nevermore"—
And we who loved him, weep, and weeping,
say—
"Farewell, farewell"—and sighing turn
away.

O God our Father, Lord and Guide of Time,
What have we done with this Thy perished
child?
What written on his heart? What sin or
crime?
What sacred thoughts, what actions un-
defiled?

What has he taken in his laden breast?
What love forgotten, or neglected quest?
What hopes grown craven, or what conquered
wrong?
What work accomplished, what victorious
song?

Leave us not, Lord, alone upon this edge
Between the old and new—ere yet, in light,
The New Year, walking o'er the eastern
ledge
Call joyously—"Awake, the path is bright!"

Be with us in this dull, regretful hour,
Bid us look forward, kindle us with power :
All that was ill, burn Thou with cleansing
 fire,
All that is good, establish and inspire.

And thou whom years of suffering could not
 fret,
Child, Friend and Brother, Lover of Man-
 kind,
Speak to us now, undo our vain regret,
Call us from graves, our death in life unbind.

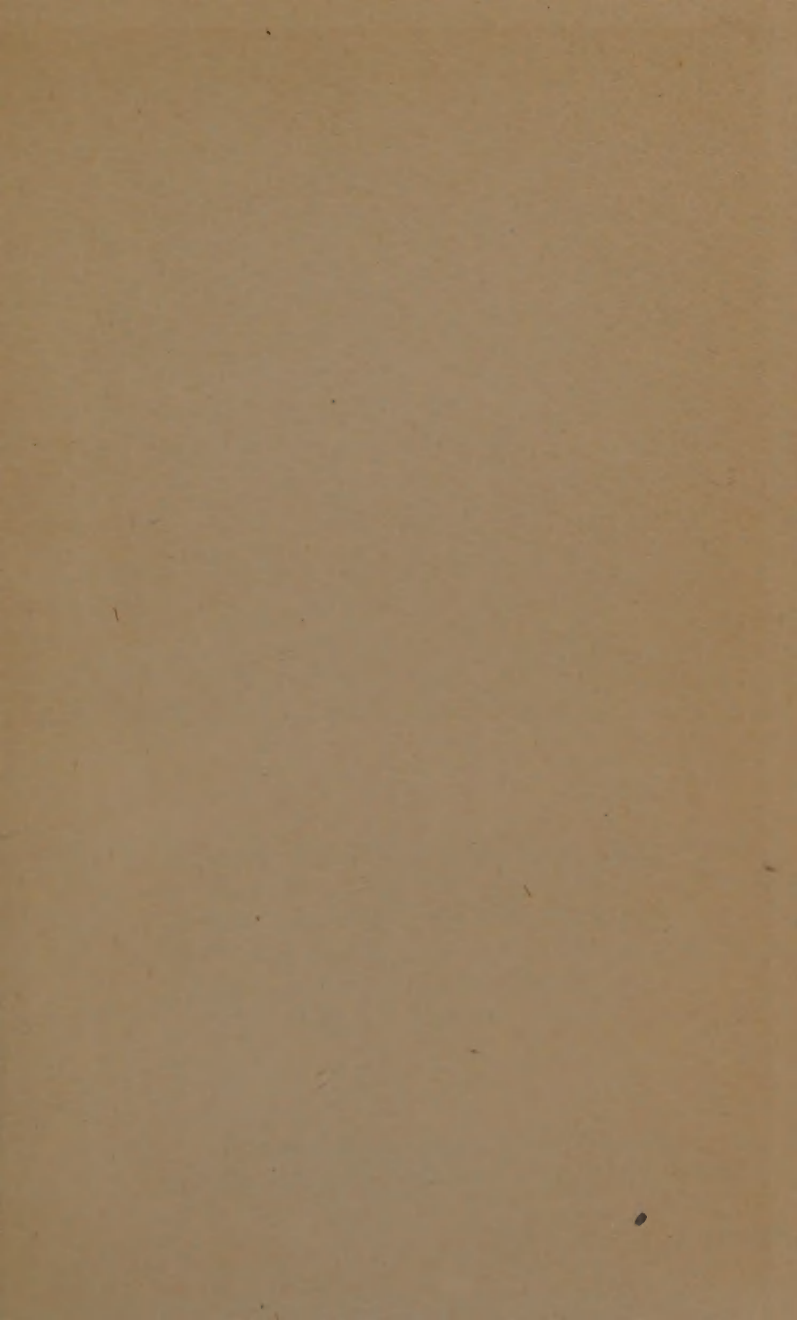
Cry, "Wake and sing, O thou that liest in
 sleep;
The morning dew is falling, and the deep
Full heaven is bright, and I will summon
 thee—
Linger no more; come forth and follow me;

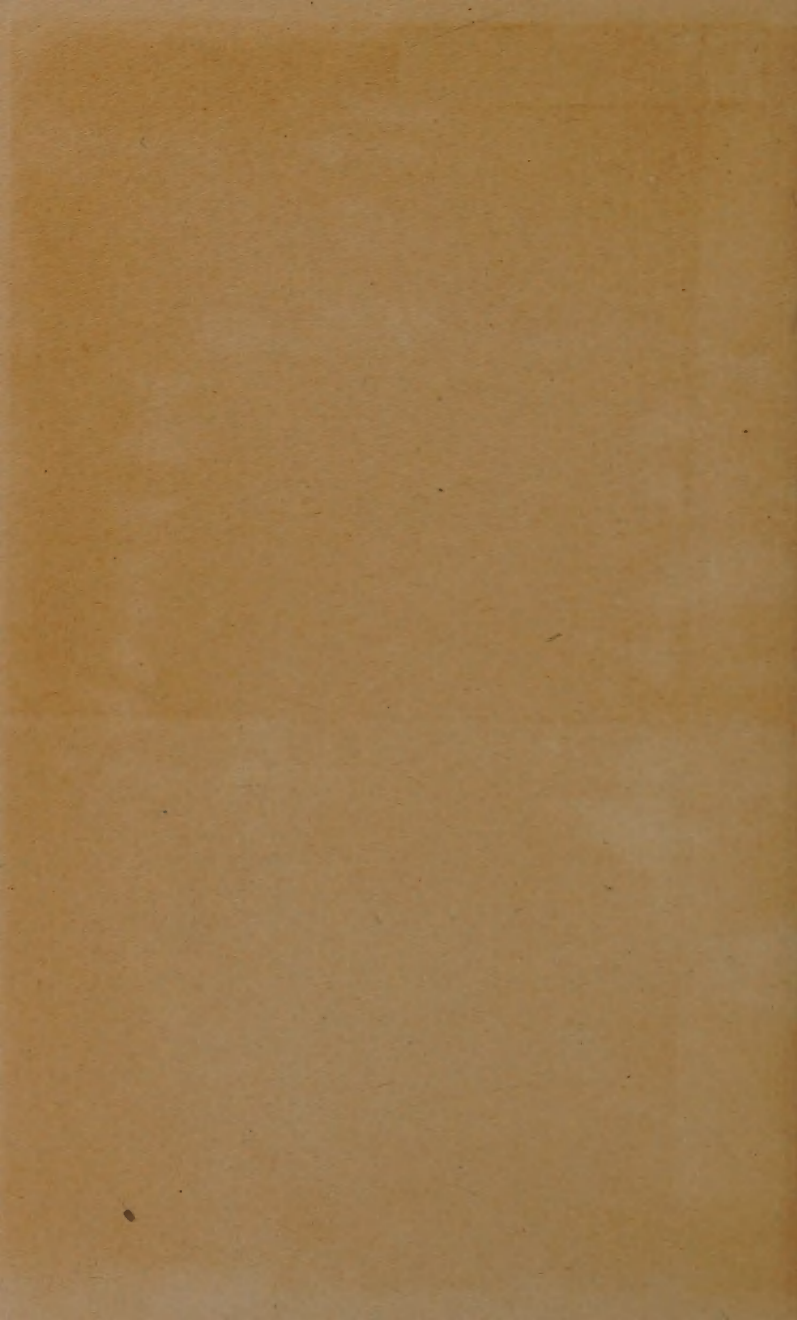
"Take up thy cross, and lose thy life that
 thou
Mayst find the life of love; and let the dead
Bury their dead; lay hand upon the plough,
And look not backward;—God is over-
 head!"

Yes, Lord, we rise with thee from year to
year;

Death begets life, and love hath cast out
fear,

And all the hours of time, in passing by,
Strengthen in us the Christ that cannot die.





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9843 "Die to live"; selections from Stopford
B79 Brooke arranged by his daughter, Olive Jack
D5 With a foreword by L.P. Jacks. London,
Hodder and Stoughton [1925?]
viii, 215p. illus. 19cm.

1. Unitarian churches--Sermons. I. Jacks
Olive Cecilia (Brooke) ed. II. Title.

A18144

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A18144

